EXPANDED COLLECTOR'S EDITION!

bake FROM scratch

holiday cookies

Bake, Share, Celebrate
Cookies That Bring Everyone Together

75 *recipes*
+ IDEAS IN OUR BIGGEST-EVER ISSUE!

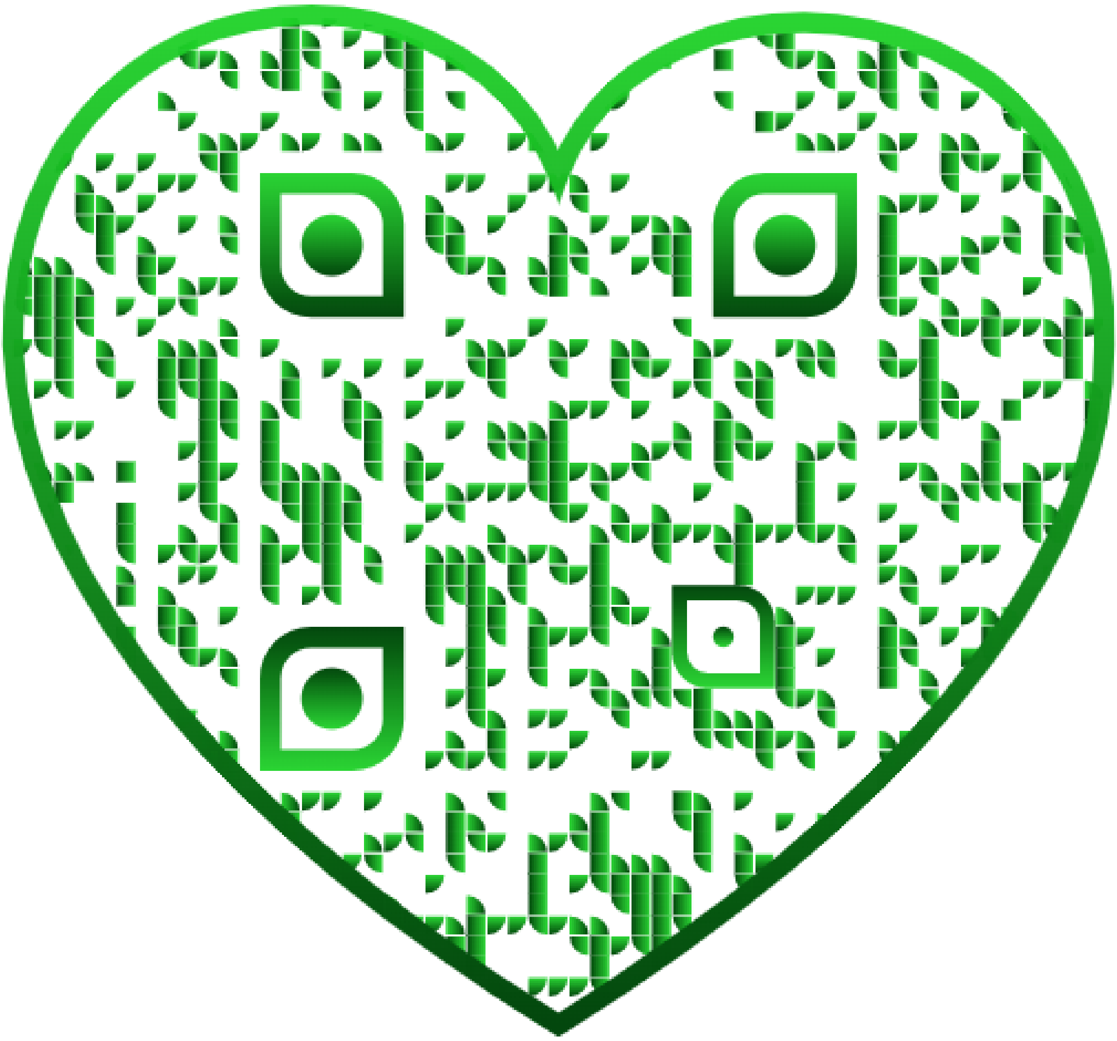
BAKE FROM SCRATCH SPECIAL ISSUE

$14.99US $17.99CAN

5 2>

6 20058 40646 5

DISPLAY UNTIL JANUARY 12, 2026



Buttery Fontina
Savory Artigiano
Fresh Mozzarella
SHARE THE JOY!
Nutty Parmesan
Smoked Scamorzarella

DISCOVER
MORE ABOUT
OUR CHEESES
AND FIND
RECIPES

CLASSIC ITALIAN CHEESES MADE IN THE U.S.A.
FORMAGGI CLASSICI ITALIANI FATTI IN AMERICA
SAY BEL-JOY-OSO

BelGioioso®

table of contents

13 FROM OUR FAMILY TO YOURS
Heirloom recipes from the Hoffman Media team shared with you

33 SLICE-AND-BAKE
Each of these diverse doughs is easy to make, shape, and bake

53 GLAZED, TOPPED, AND SWIRLED
Whether spooned, spread, or piped, these cookies all have a tasty top layer

83 FILLED, STUFFED, AND SANDWICHED
Elevate your baking game with these surprise-inside cookie creations

107 BEST OF THE REST
From colorful and kid-friendly to simple sophistication and plenty in between

bake FROM scratch

EDITORIAL

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Brian Hart Hoffman

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR Nancy Meeks
SENIOR FEATURES EDITOR Amber Wilson
ASSISTANT EDITOR Shelby Duffy
BAKING AND PASTRY EDITOR Katie Moon Dickerson
SENIOR COPY EDITOR, FOOD Meg Lundberg

PHOTOGRAPHERS
Jim Bathie, John O'Hagan,
Stephanie Welbourne Steele

SENIOR DIGITAL IMAGING SPECIALIST
Delisa McDaniel

ADMINISTRATIVE SENIOR ART DIRECTOR
Tracy Wood-Franklin
SENIOR ART DIRECTOR Cailyn Haynes
ART DIRECTOR Liz Kight
GRAPHIC DESIGNER Courtney Bell

STYLISTS Maghan Armstrong, Haley Bilunas,
Emily Thomas

TEST KITCHEN DIRECTOR Laura Crandall
FOOD STYLISTS/RECIPE DEVELOPERS
Ola Agbodza, Katie Moon Dickerson, Kathleen Kanen,
Vanessa Rocchio, Amanda Stabile
TEST KITCHEN ASSISTANT/PREP COOK
Madison Harvel
CONTRIBUTING FOOD STYLIST Aaron Conrad

DIGITAL MEDIA

DIGITAL EXPERIENCE DIRECTOR
Courtney duQuesnay
MARKETING DIRECTOR Kari Parker
DIGITAL EDITOR Sarah Jarnagin
ECOMMERCE MANAGER Laura Hammonds
MARKETING DESIGNER Megan Jean-Anne

ADMINISTRATIVE

DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
Amanda Golz
EVENT DIRECTOR Charlotte Gibens
PRODUCTION/CIRCULATION MANAGER
Samantha Sullivan

INTEGRATED MARKETING SOLUTIONS

REGIONAL ADVERTISING DIRECTORS
Christy Chachere Lohmann [AL, AR, LA, MS]
Mary-Evelyn Dalton [NY, TN, TX, VA, WA]
Julie Goering [FL, GA, NC, SC]
Julie Riley [Midwest, Northeast, Northwest]

SALES DEVELOPMENT REPRESENTATIVE
Megan Lankford

DIRECTOR OF INTEGRATED BRAND PARTNERSHIPS Lindsay Jones Edmonds
DIRECTOR OF MARKETING Kari Parker
ADVERTISING & MARKETING MANAGER
Mandy Pettit
DIGITAL ADVERTISING COORDINATOR
Madison McCombs
ADVERTISING PRODUCTION REPRESENTATIVE
Jacob Carey

For assistance with advertising, please call (205) 995-8860.

hoffmanmedia

FOUNDER Phyllis Hoffman DePiano
(1953–2023)

PRESIDENT/CEO Eric W. Hoffman

EVP/COO Greg Baugh
EVP/CCO Brooke Michael Bell
EVP/CMO Missy Polhemus
EVP/CFO Laura Sappington

PRESIDENT/CCO Brian Hart Hoffman

EVP/CSO 83 PRESS Kristy Harrison
VP/TECHNOLOGY Matthew Scott Holt
VP/HUMAN RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION
Judy Brown Lazenby
VP/ADVERTISING Amy Robertson

EDITORIAL & ADVERTISING OFFICE

2323 2nd Avenue North
Birmingham, AL 35203
Email: *bakefromscratch@hoffmanmedia.com*
Phone: (205) 995-8860

SUBSCRIPTION CUSTOMER SERVICE

Bake from Scratch, PO Box 35061
Seattle, WA 98124-5059
Email: *bakefromscratch@emailcustomerservice.com*
Phone: (888) 647-7304

Bake from Scratch Holiday Cookies is published by Hoffman Media, LLC, 2323 2nd Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203.

The cover and contents are fully protected by copyright and cannot be reproduced in any manner without prior written permission. All rights reserved in all countries.
©2025 Hoffman Media, LLC. Printed in the USA.

OFFICIAL PARTNER
bake FROM scratch
TEST KITCHEN

Expertly tested recipes featuring premium ingredients

The recipes in each issue pass through the *Bake from Scratch* test kitchen. Each is flavorful and distinctive and developed with your kitchen success in mind.

These products are partners of *Bake from Scratch* magazine and used exclusively in our recipes.

BELGIOIOSO

We pride ourselves on the finest recipes, and BelGioioso® Cheese helps us get there one ingredient faster. Whether you're snacking, cooking, or baking, they provide unmatched premium Italian-style cheeses. From bold, flavor-filled aged varieties to soft, creamy, fresh spreadable cheeses, BelGioioso® brings the JOY by providing excellence in every bite.

Bonne Maman®

There's something about a homemade treat that puts a smile on our faces, and that's exactly why Bonne Maman® is our go-to for preserves and fruit spreads. Made with simple and natural ingredients of the finest quality, Bonne Maman's wide variety of fruit preserves, jellies, and artisan spreads ensures our from-scratch recipes taste fresh.

Bob's Red Mill®

We're passionate about authenticity and high-quality ingredients in every bake, just like Bob's Red Mill® is. From staple flours and specialty baking blends to hearty oats and whole grains, its commitment to nourishing ingredients shines through in each bag. Better your baking by using Bob's Red Mill® as the base for your recipes.

RED STAR®

When using Red Star® yeast in our recipes, we can rest easy knowing we have a reliable product to take our breads from ordinary to sensational. No matter the type of yeast, Red Star® provides consistent performance to make all our yeasted bakes a success.

A Decade of Sweet Traditions

Ten years ago, *Bake from Scratch* began with a simple mission: to celebrate the spirit of baking. Today, we honor that journey with our largest *Holiday Cookies* special issue yet, a tribute to the joy, creativity, and connection that cookies bring to every celebration.

It's hard to believe we're celebrating our 10th anniversary. When I started *Bake from Scratch*, I couldn't have imagined the hundreds of recipes, countless shared bakes, and—most of all—the community that would grow around them. This year's *Holiday Cookies* is our biggest yet, made to be scribbled in with notes, butter-stained, and brought out again and again.

We begin with "From Our Family to Yours," where folks from the *Bake from Scratch* editorial and test kitchen teams and our larger Hoffman Media family, plus our 2025 contributing editor Edd Kimber, share our own favorites alongside treasured recipes from friends Gesine Bullock-Prado, Dorie Greenspan, and Sally McKenney that you'll find elsewhere in the issue. Each one comes with a story, a memory, and the baker's own touch.

Next, "Slice-and-Bake" deliver ready-when-you-are treats, from bergamot-scented London Fog Cookies to the playful color of Spumoni Checkerboards. "Glazed, Topped, and Swirled" sparkles with Peppermint Meltaways, tiramisù-inspired cookies, and tiny bûche de Noël beauties that are almost too pretty to eat. "Filled, Stuffed, and Sandwiched" hides surprises in every bite—Maple Creme Cookies, Jam Crumble Cookies, and Apple Cider Whoopie Pies—while our final chapter offers a little of everything, like chunky Rocky Road Cookies, colorful Reindeer Kisses, and buttery Toasted Hazelnut Sablés.

If there's one thing I've learned in a decade of *Bake from Scratch*, it's that baking cookies is never just about the cookies. It's about the way the kitchen feels warmer, the air smells sweeter, and the people around you linger a little longer. I hope this issue inspires you to bake, share, and make memories—this season and always.

Now, preheat your oven; it's time to bake!

Brian

Brian Hart Hoffman
Editor-in-Chief

FOLLOW US FOR DAILY INSPIRATION

thebakefeed bakefromscratch bakefromscratch bakefromscratchmagazine

BROWNED BUTTER-CHOCOLATE CHUNK-CANDY COOKIES

Makes about 20 cookies

Recipe by Brian Hart Hoffman

Browning the butter is the soul of this recipe—slowly cooked until nutty and amber and then cooled until solid before creaming with the sugars. This method preserves that toasty complexity while still allowing proper aeration for a tender, chewy crumb. A mix of chunky chocolate and crushed red and green candies brings a satisfying interplay of melt and crunch, with a final sprinkle of crushed candy for instant festive color. These cookies began life during the first spring of the COVID-19 pandemic, originally made with pastel chocolate eggs, but I adapted them for the holidays—and I hope you'll make them your own, too!

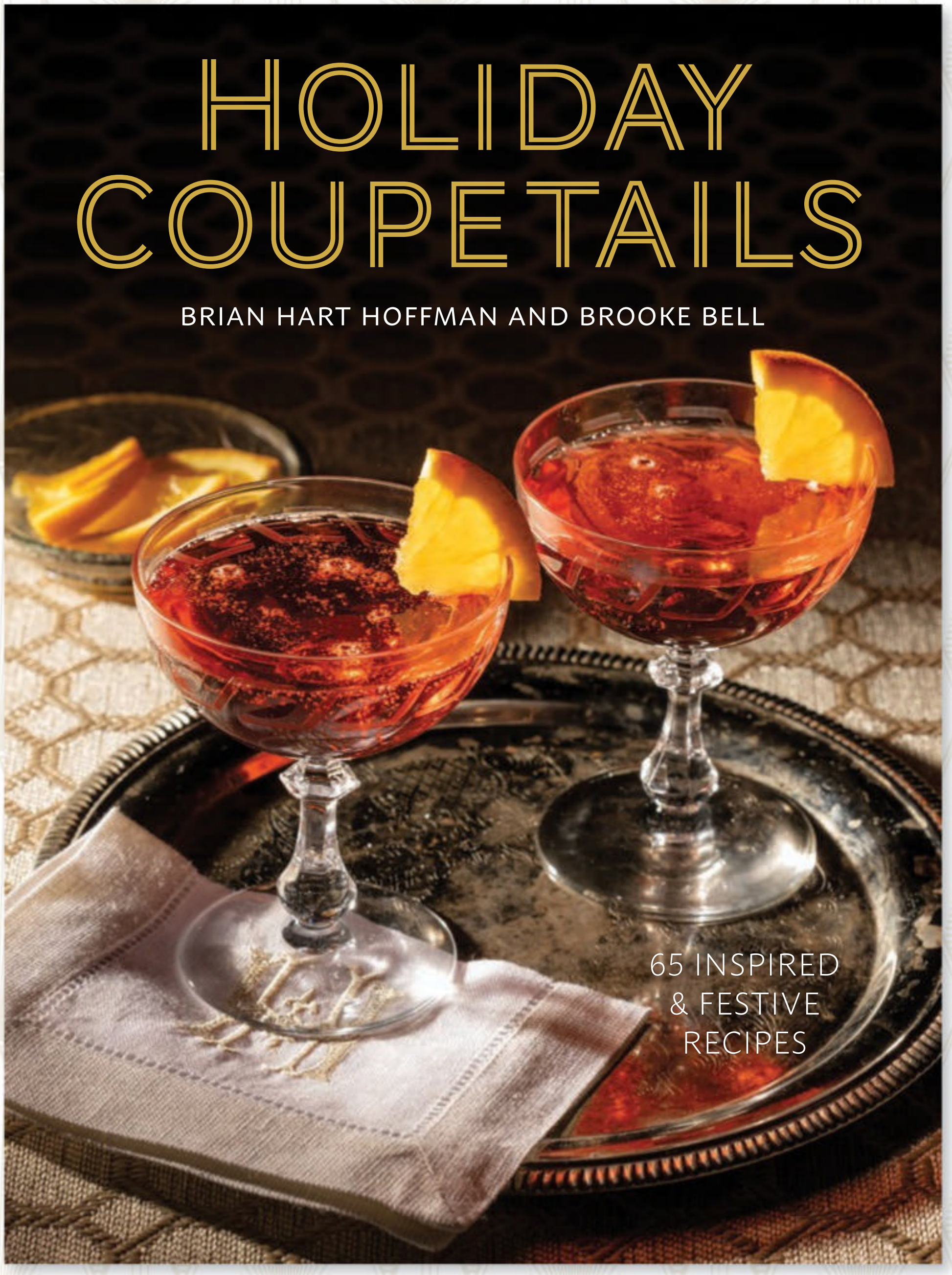
* * * * *

1	**cup (227 grams) unsalted butter**
¾	**cup (150 grams) granulated sugar**
½	**cup (110 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
2	**large eggs (100 grams)**
1	**large egg yolk (19 grams)**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
2¾	**cups (344 grams) all-purpose flour**
1	**teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
¾	**teaspoon (4 grams) baking soda**
1	**cup (163 grams) crushed red and green candy-coated chocolate pieces**
1	**cup (163 grams) chocolate chunks**
¾	**cup (157 grams) lightly crushed red and green chocolate candies**
Garnish:	**finely crushed red and green candies, flaked sea salt**

1. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a medium light-colored saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Cook until butter turns a medium-brown color and has a nutty aroma, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat, and pour into a medium bowl. Place bowl in a large bowl full of ice water. Let cool, stirring every 5 minutes, until butter solidifies.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat browned butter and sugars at medium speed until fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape paddle and bottom and sides of bowl. Add eggs and egg yolk, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, kosher salt, and baking soda. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined and stopping to scrape paddle and bottom and sides of bowl. Beat in crushed candies and chocolate chunks.
5. Using a 2½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and place on prepared pan. Sprinkle lightly crushed candies onto dough. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or up to overnight.
6. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
7. Place dough balls 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
8. Bake for 6 minutes. Rotate pans, and bake until golden brown, 8 to 10 minutes more. Garnish with finely crushed candies and sea salt, if desired. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Note: *If you don't have chocolate chunks, use whatever chocolate chips you have on hand.*

Order Now!



HOLIDAY COUPETAILS

BRIAN HART HOFFMAN AND BROOKE BELL

65 INSPIRED & FESTIVE RECIPES

POP SOME BUBBLY AND RAISE A COUPE TO YOUR NEW FAVORITE COCKTAIL BOOK

This festive collection of cocktail recipes crafted by Brian Hart Hoffman and Brooke Bell includes seasonal flavors served up in the preferred glass of imbibers everywhere: the coupe. In addition to favorite drinks, Holiday Coupetails *also offers appetizers and desserts to keep your holidays merry and bright. From warm, cozy drinks perfect for sipping fireside to big-batch cocktails and light bites ideal for holiday entertaining, this book embraces the magic of the season.*

Merry Christmas

Grinch Punch

Iced Gingerbread Cookies

Boulevardier

Spiced & Spiked Apple Cider

3 EASY WAYS TO ORDER

BAKEFROMSCRATCH.COM/COUPETAILS

800-361-8059

83PCP23

holiday cookie index

Nussecken **15**

Date Balls **18**

Pizzelles **19**

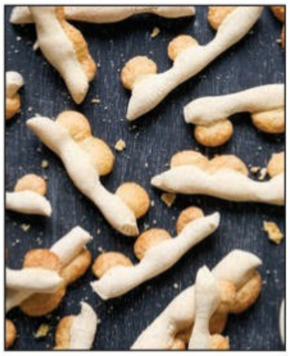
Pecan Praline-Topped Sweet Potato Cookies **22**

Oatmeal Crinkles Cookies **23**

Sicilian Ribbon Cookies **26**

Chocolate-Peppermint Marble Cookies **27**

Old-Fashioned Gingersnaps **30**

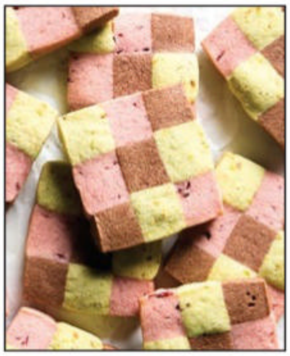


Ossi dei Morto **31**

Salted Espresso Shortbread **35**

Dark Chocolate-Orange Cookies **38**

Spiced Cranberry-Orange Cookies **39**



Spumoni Checkerboards **42**

Rum Raisin Cookies **43**

London Fog Cookies **46**

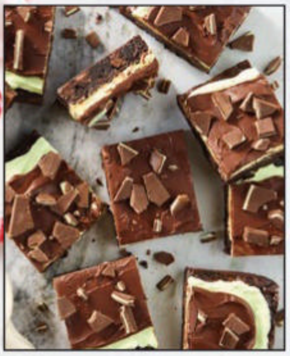
Fruitcake Cookies **47**

Mexican Hot Chocolate Cookies **50**

Red Velvet Pinwheels **51**

Milk Punch Cookies **55**

Jam-Swirled Cream Cheese Cookies **58**

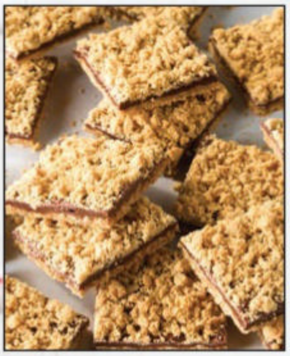


Crème de Menthe Brownies **59**

Peppermint Meltaways **62**

Oatmeal-Date Cookies **63**

Bûche de Noël Cookies **66**



Tante Erika's Creamy Chocolate Oatmeal Squares **67**

Peppermint-Glazed Black Cocoa Cookies **70**

Tiramisù Cookies **71**

Pfeffernüsse (German Spice Cookies) **74**

Beggars' Bars **75**

Lemon-Glazed Gingerbread Cookies **78**

Sicilian Lemon-Almond Cookies **79**

Chocolate-Covered Marshmallow Cookies **82**

Pizzicati **85**

Brown Sugar Sandwich Cookies **88**

Marshmallow-Stuffed Molasses Cookies **89**

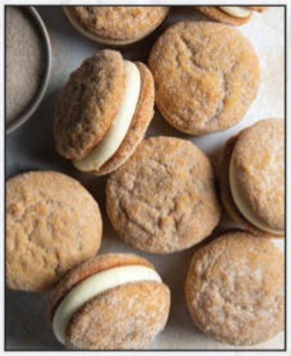
Maple Creme Cookies **92**

Jam Crumble Cookies 93

Cuccidati Cookie Cake 96

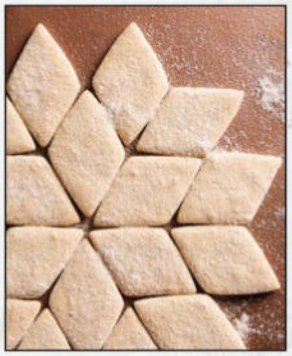
Dubai Chocolate Sandwich Cookies 97

Italian Cream Thumbprints 100


Apple Cider Whoopie Pies 101

Chocolate-Covered Cherry Thrumbprints 104

Linzer Cookie Torte 105


Bizcochitos 109

French Salted Butter Cookies 112

Rocky Road Cookies 113

Reindeer Kisses 116

Ricciarelli 117

Toasted Hazelnut Sablés 120

No-Bake Chocolate-Peanut Butter-Oat Cookies 121

Cookie Butter Blondies 124

Melomakarona 125

Old-Fashioned Gingersnaps, PAGE 30

Oatmeal Crinkle Cookies,
PAGE 23

FROM OUR family TO yours

CHERISHED RECIPES FROM
THE HOFFMAN MEDIA FAMILY
TO SHARE WITH YOU AND YOURS

NUSSECKEN

Makes 24 bars

Nussecken, *or "nut corners," are a traditional German dessert consisting of four layers of perfectly balanced flavors and textures: a tender and buttery shortbread base, a thin layer of apricot jam, a crunchy topping of roasted nuts caramelized with butter and sugar, and a finishing drizzle or dip of rich chocolate. I make cookie boxes centered around my family heritage every year, and I always include these Nussecken, which have been handed down from my great-grandmother. They're easy to make and always a hit!*

—Amanda Stabile, recipe developer, *Bake from Scratch*

* * *

Crust:

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (151 grams) all-purpose flour
⅓ cup (67 grams) granulated sugar
½ teaspoon (3 grams) baking powder
⅓ cup (75 grams) unsalted butter, softened
1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract

¼ cup (80 grams) apricot jam

Topping:

½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
7 tablespoons (98 grams) unsalted butter
2 tablespoons (30 grams) water
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
1 cup (96 grams) ground hazelnuts or hazelnut flour
¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons (99 grams) finely chopped hazelnuts

6 ounces (170 grams) dark or semisweet chocolate, melted and cooled slightly

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray a 13x9-inch baking pan with baking spray with flour. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over long sides of pan.

2. For crust: In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk flour, sugar, and baking powder by hand until combined. Add butter, egg, and vanilla; using the paddle attachment, beat at low speed until just combined and a soft dough forms. Press dough into a thin layer in bottom of prepared pan. (It will seem like not enough dough, but a small offset spatula or damp hands will make it easier to press.) Spread jam in a thin layer onto dough.

3. For topping: In a medium saucepan, combine sugar, butter, 2 tablespoons (30 grams) water, and vanilla. Cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until sugar is melted and bubbles form around sides of pan. Remove from heat, and let cool for 5 minutes. Stir in ground and chopped hazelnuts. Pour hazelnut mixture onto jam, spreading as needed.

4. Bake until golden brown, edges are set, and surface looks dry, 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool completely in pan.

5. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan, and place on a cutting board. Trim edges, and cut into 12 squares. Cut each square into 2 triangles. Dip 2 bottom corners of each triangle into melted chocolate. (See Note.) Let stand until chocolate is set. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

Note: *These cookie bars are tender, so if you have a hard time dipping them, freeze them on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet until firm, about 10 minutes, before continuing.*

DATE BALLS

Makes about 75 balls

My mother was a home economics teacher for about 25 years, and each school year in December, she taught her students how to make an assortment of holiday candies and cookies. This recipe, which my mom got from my paternal grandmother in 1974, was just one of the dozen or so that the students became familiar with. The kids made so much of everything that there was enough for each class to have a party with their treats, a plus a steady supply for the school faculty and staff.

—Nancy Meeks, editorial director, *Bake from Scratch*

* * *

1 pound (454 grams) dried whole pitted dates, finely chopped
1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
1 cup (227 grams) non-European–style salted butter
1½ cups (170 grams) finely chopped toasted pecans (see Note)
2 tablespoons (30 grams) bourbon (optional)
2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
2½ cups (135 grams) crisp rice cereal, plus more as needed
Confectioners' sugar, for coating

1. In a large saucepan, bring dates, granulated sugar, and butter to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring frequently until sugar is melted; cook, stirring frequently, until thickened, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in pecans, bourbon (if using), and vanilla. Stir in cereal until well combined. (Mixture should hold together and be similar in consistency to Rice Krispies Treats; gradually stir in more cereal as needed.) Let cool just enough to handle.
2. When mixture is cool enough to handle but still warm, shape into bite-size balls (about 2 teaspoons or 15 grams each). Let cool completely on parchment or wax paper.
3. Roll cooled balls in confectioners' sugar to fully coat. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

Note: *If want to omit the nuts, you'll need to add more rice cereal for the correct consistency.*

PIZZELLES

Makes 12 (5-inch) cookies

In addition to the year-round breads and desserts she made for almost every meal, my great-aunt Rosie made these classic Italian cookies every Christmastime. Similar to a waffle, the batter is cooked on a pizzelle press, which imprints a decorative pattern into the cookies as they cook. Anise is the most common flavor for these, but vanilla, lemon, or orange extract can be used if you prefer a different taste.

—Mark Crandall, sales representative, 83 Press/Hoffman Media

* * *

1½	**cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour**
1	**teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
¾	**teaspoon (4 grams) baking powder**
½	**cup (113 grams) non-European–style unsalted butter, softened**
½	**cup plus 1 tablespoon (112 grams) granulated sugar**
2	**large eggs (100 grams), room temperature**
1½	**tablespoons (20 grams) pure anise extract**

1. In a medium bowl, sift together flour, salt, and baking powder.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and granulated sugar at medium speed until well combined. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until smooth after each addition. Beat in anise extract.

3. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until combined. (Mixture will be a very thick batter. It should be thick enough that it doesn't fall off the spoon when you take a small amount out of the bowl.)

4. Heat pizzelle press according to manufacturer's directions. (See Note.) Spray press with cooking spray. Spoon 2½ tablespoons (40 grams) batter onto each side of press. Close lid, and cook until lightly golden but not brown, 1 to 1½ minutes. Remove from press, and trim, if needed. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

Note: *We used a 5-inch pizzelle press, so batter amounts and cooking times are based on that size. Pizzelle presses come in different sizes, so be prepared to adjust and test batter amounts if your press is different.*

PECAN PRALINE-TOPPED SWEET POTATO COOKIES

Makes about 12 cookies

My mom makes a fabulous sweet potato casserole for every Thanksgiving. Everyone loves it, especially the gooey nut topping she uses instead of marshmallows. It's a known sin to take only the topping and leave behind the sweet potatoes, but there's always one person who inevitably sneaks off with a plate of (mostly) pecan topping. Her casserole inspired me to create these cookies, which combine a chewy sweet potato base and an indulgent nutty sauce. They've become a tradition themselves now, too!

—Shelby Duffy, assistant editor, *Bake from Scratch*

* * *

½	**cup (70 grams) mashed sweet potatoes**
½	**cup (113 grams) non-European–style unsalted butter, cubed**
½	**cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
½	**cup (110 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
1	**large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
1½	**cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour**
½	**teaspoon (3 grams) baking soda**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**

Pecan Praline Sauce (recipe follows)

1. In a medium saucepan, cook potatoes over medium heat, stirring frequently, until thickened, slightly darkened in color, fragrant, and some liquid has cooked off, 5 to 6 minutes. Stir in butter until melted. Transfer to a medium heatproof bowl. Let cool slightly.

2. Whisk sugars into potato mixture until well combined. Whisk in egg yolk and vanilla.

3. In another medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, and salt. Gradually add flour mixture to potato mixture, folding until fully combined. Cover and refrigerate for at least 40 minutes or up to 2 hours.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

5. Using a 2-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

6. Bake until edges are lightly browned, 15 to 20 minutes. Let cool completely on pans.

7. Top cooled cookies with Pecan Praline Sauce. Best served same day as made. If making ahead, store cookies without sauce in an airtight container for up to 3 days. Top with Pecan Praline Sauce just before serving.

PECAN PRALINE SAUCE

Makes 1 cup

¾	**cup (165 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
½	**cup (120 grams) heavy whipping cream**
½	**cup (55 grams) chopped pecans**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
1½	**teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract**

1. In a small saucepan, stir together brown sugar and cream. Cook over medium heat, stirring just until sugar is melted and fully combined. Add pecans and salt. Bring to a boil; cook, stirring constantly, until sauce is thickened and coats the back of a spoon, 4 to 5 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in vanilla. Let cool completely before using. Use immediately, or cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days.

OATMEAL CRINKLE COOKIES

Makes about 48 cookies

This is the one cookie my dad always makes at the holidays, and he always makes a double batch and thinks no one will find where he hides the extras! My great-grandmother Hannah Gesling Holschuh created the recipe in the early 1900s; she baked these for her three daughters, who each passed them down through their own families. My aunts and uncles have fond memories of sneaking these cookies out of the cookie jar as youngsters, and my Grandma Breme always made sure to bake a few extra batches. The cookies are crisp on the outside, gooey on the inside, and have subtle nutty chewiness from the oats. And even though there's brown sugar in the dough and confectioners' sugar on the exterior, they're not overly sweet.

—Liz Kight, art director, *Bake from Scratch*

* * *

1 cup (192 grams) all-vegetable shortening
2 cups (440 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder
1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda
½ teaspoon (3 grams) salt
3 cups (240 grams) quick-cooking oats
Confectioners' sugar, for coating

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat shortening and brown sugar at medium speed until fluffy and well combined, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until combined. Beat in vanilla.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to shortening mixture, beating until combined. Beat in oats. Cover and refrigerate until firm, 2 to 4 hours, or up to overnight.

3. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and roll into balls. Roll each ball in confectioners' sugar to heavily coat. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pan.

5. Bake until edges are set, 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

SICILIAN RIBBON COOKIES

Makes about 32 cookies

My husband's family emigrated from Sicily in 1954 and brought all their recipes with them. Although there are several recipes that his family insists will remain top-secret, I was able to get this recipe, also known as wandies. The delicate, crisp texture of these fried cookies and their not-too-sweet taste are a great balance to other decadent treats during the holidays. You can flavor them with lemon zest, vanilla, or rum, and although it's not traditional, my mother-in-law loves to drizzle them with honey.

—Laura Crandall, test kitchen director, Hoffman Media

* * *

3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour
3 tablespoons (39 grams) granulated sugar
1¼ teaspoons (6 grams) baking powder
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
4 large eggs (200 grams), room temperature
Vegetable oil, for frying
Garnish: confectioners' sugar

1. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse flour, granulated sugar, baking powder, and salt until combined. With processor running, add eggs, one at a time, until a dough has formed.
2. On a heavily floured surface, knead dough until it is no longer sticky. Wrap dough in plastic wrap, and let rest for 15 minutes.
3. In a medium Dutch oven, pour oil to a depth of 3 inches, and heat over medium-high heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 375°F (190°C), adjusting heat as needed. Line a rimmed baking sheet with paper towels.
4. Unwrap dough, and cut into 4 portions. Working with 1 portion at a time, on a lightly floured surface, roll to about 1⁄16-inch thickness (8 to 9 inches wide). Using a fluted pastry wheel, cut into 8- to 9-inch-long strips. Tie each strip in a knot.
5. Working in batches, carefully drop a few cookies at a time into hot oil, and fry until golden brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from oil using a slotted spoon, and let drain on prepared pan. Garnish with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Best enjoyed same day but can be stored in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

CHOCOLATE-PEPPERMINT MARBLE COOKIES

Makes 6 large cookies

These fun cookies are the cookie version of peppermint bark, my favourite holiday treat. A cocoa and plain dough are marbled together and jam-packed with white chocolate. To keep this recipe small batch, the egg has been removed entirely and replaced instead with milk. If you want to make these vegan, you can also simply swap out the butter for a plant-based alternative and use a nondairy milk.

—Edd Kimber, 2025 contributing editor, *Bake from Scratch*

* * *

5 tablespoons (70 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature
½ cup (110 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
3½ tablespoons (75 grams) molasses
3 tablespoons (45 grams) whole milk
½ to 1 teaspoon peppermint extract
1 cup plus 3 tablespoons (150 grams) all-purpose flour, divided
½ teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
¼ teaspoon fine sea salt
5 ounces (142 grams) white chocolate, roughly chopped
2 tablespoons (10 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder
Garnish: flaked sea salt

1. To make the cookie dough, add the butter, sugar, and molasses to the bowl of your stand mixer, and beat together until light and fluffy, 4 to 5 minutes. Add milk, 1 tablespoon at a time, mixing until fully combined before adding more. Add extract.
2. Meanwhile, add 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (141 grams) flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt to a large bowl, and whisk to combine. Add the flour mixture to the butter mixture, and beat briefly to form a dough.
3. Divide the dough into two even portions (about 270 grams each). To one portion, mix in the remaining 1 tablespoon (8 grams) flour followed by half of the white chocolate. To the other portion, add in the cocoa powder and the remaining white chocolate. Refrigerate the doughs for 1 hour.
4. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C), and line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
5. Divide each of the doughs into six portions (about 48 grams each). Taking a portion from each cookie dough, press together and roll into a ball. Place the dough onto the baking tray, and repeat to make six cookies, spacing 2 inches apart.
6. Bake until the cookies are lightly browned around the edges, about 15 minutes. Garnish with flaked salt, if desired. Let cookies cool on the pan for 20 minutes. Remove from the pan, and let them cool completely on a wire rack. These cookies will keep 4 to 5 days in a sealed container.

Photo by Edd Kimber

OLD-FASHIONED GINGERSNAPS

Makes about 46 cookies

This recipe comes from my great-grandmother, and it dates back to the 1920s. I think it's the first cookie I learned to make by myself, since the ingredient list isn't long and you can mix the cookies in one bowl with just a wooden spoon. As a 9-year-old in 4-H, I received a blue ribbon for the gingersnaps in the county fair. The original recipe calls for lard, but shortening's neutral flavor lets the molasses and spices shine and makes these cookies softer than other gingersnap variations. I modernize them with white chocolate and sparkling sugar or sprinkles, but they're also perfect left plain with a glass of milk.

—Joy Ercanbrack, director of education, Original Sewing & Quilting Expo, Hoffman Media

* * *

¾	**cup (144 grams) all-vegetable shortening**
1	**cup (200 grams) granulated sugar**
⅓	**cup (113 grams) molasses**
1	**large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
2	**cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour**
2	**teaspoons (10 grams) baking soda**
1	**teaspoon (2 grams) ground ginger**
1	**teaspoon (2 grams) ground cloves**
1	**teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon**
½	**teaspoon (3 grams) salt**
1	**(10-ounce) bag (283.8 grams) white chocolate melting wafers, melted according to package directions**

Garnish: sparkling sugar, holiday sprinkles

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat shortening, granulated sugar, and molasses at medium speed until well combined, 1 to 2 minutes, stopping to scrape paddle and sides of bowl. Beat in egg.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, ginger, cloves, cinnamon, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to shortening mixture, beating until combined. Using a 1-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and roll into balls. Gently roll in granulated sugar to coat. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

4. Bake until edges are set and centers are dry, 8 to 9 minutes. Let cool completely on pans on wire racks.

5. Dip each cooled cookie halfway into melted white chocolate, letting excess drip off; place on parchment paper, and garnish with sparkling sugar or sprinkles, if desired. Let stand until chocolate is set. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

OSSI DEI MORTO

Makes about 100 cookies

Allhallowtide is a three-day-long commemoration in early November for Christians to remember loved ones who have passed, to pray and take communion, and to reflect on their beliefs. In Sicily, ossi dei morto *(bones of the dead) is a traditional treat enjoyed throughout Allhallowtide, particularly on All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. The cookies are meant to resemble bleached, brittle bones. They have a very crunchy outer shell, which is achieved by letting the shaped dough dry out and harden overnight. And although this recipe makes a lot, they're very small, and a serving is a handful. I love to dip them in coffee to soften just a little before eating.*

—Laura Crandall, test kitchen director, Hoffman Media

• • • • •

1¾ cups plus 2 tablespoons (226 grams) confectioners' sugar
1¾ cups plus 1 tablespoon (227 grams) all-purpose flour
2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder
¼ teaspoon (1 gram) vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon (1 gram) almond extract

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat all ingredients at low speed until a dough ball forms. Divide into 2 portions. Roll each portion into a long rope the thickness of a pencil. Cut ropes on an angle into about 2-inch-long pieces. Place on ungreased baking sheets, and let stand at room temperature overnight.
2. Preheat oven to 325°F (170°C).
3. Bake, one pan at a time, until lightly browned, 15 to 20 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. Let cool completely on pans on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

Note: *The "bubbles" on the cookies develop during baking; this is perfectly normal.*

Mexican Hot Chocolate Cookies, PAGE 50

slice AND bake

Spumoni Checkerboards, PAGE 42

FROM SPIRALED PINWHEELS TO FRUIT-STUDDED CHECKERBOARDS, A LITTLE SHAPING GOES A LONG WAY TOWARD HOLIDAY COOKIE HEAVEN

SALTED ESPRESSO SHORTBREAD

Makes 18 cookies

Think of these as your favorite butter cookies but all grown up. The dough itself is a classic sablé *style—sandy, tender, and unapologetically buttery. Beating the butter, sugar, espresso powder, and salt until light and creamy isn't just about aeration; it creates a uniform emulsion that ensures a melt-in-your-mouth crumb. There's no egg—just flour folded in gently so as not to develop too much gluten, resulting in that classic shortbread texture. Shaping the dough into a compact log before chilling allows for easy slicing later—and a cleaner edge in the bake. It's also freezer-friendly, making it a baker's best trick for impromptu guests or late-night cravings. As for the final touch, the cookies are finished with a drizzle of dark chocolate—an echo of the espresso's bitterness—and a pinch of flaked salt, which brightens and balances each bite.*

• • • • •

1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
1¼ cups (150 grams) confectioners' sugar
2 teaspoons (4 grams) espresso powder
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract
2½ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour
4 ounces (113 grams) dark chocolate melting wafers, melted according to package directions and cooled slightly
Garnish: flaked sea salt

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, confectioners' sugar, espresso powder, and kosher salt at medium speed until pale and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in vanilla. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour, beating until just combined.

2. Turn out dough onto a piece of parchment paper, and shape into a 9-inch-long log. Wrap dough in parchment, tightly twisting ends. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to overnight, or freeze for up to 3 months.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. Cut dough log crosswise into 18 (½-inch-thick) slices, and place at least 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

5. Bake until surface is dry and edges are light golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

6. Drizzle melted chocolate onto cooled cookies. Garnish with sea salt, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

PRO TIP: Use a bench scraper to help shape and smooth your dough in parchment into an even thickness. Twist the ends to secure before refrigerating.

DARK CHOCOLATE-ORANGE COOKIES

Makes 18 cookies

Deeply chocolaty, aromatic with orange, and punctuated with candied peel and shards of melty chocolate, these slice-and-bakes are a masterclass in balance: bitter, sweet, buttery, and bright. Confectioners' sugar melts into the butter to create a super-tender crumb (finer than granulated sugar would give). It's a small swap, but it makes all the difference. Candied orange peel adds chewy bursts of brightness that cut through the richness. Don't be tempted to swap it for zest; you want that syrupy chew and slow, fragrant release that only peel can offer. A quick note on slicing: Yes the mix-ins will try to sabotage your perfect rounds. Don't let them. Use a serrated knife and confidence. If the dough cracks, just press it back together. And don't skip the rest time in the fridge. This dough needs time to hydrate and firm up, ensuring clean slices and no spread in the oven.

• • • • •

¾	**cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
¾	**cup (90 grams) confectioners' sugar**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
1½	**cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour**
¼	**cup (21 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
½	**cup (75 grams) candied orange peel, finely chopped**
3	**ounces (85 grams) semisweet chocolate, finely chopped**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and confectioners' sugar at medium speed until pale and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in vanilla.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until just combined. Add candied orange peel and chocolate, and beat at low speed until combined.

3. Turn out dough onto a piece of parchment paper, and shape into a 9-inch-long log. Wrap dough in parchment, tightly twisting ends. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours or up to overnight, or freeze for up to 3 months.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

5. Using a serrated knife, cut dough log crosswise into 18 (½-inch-thick) slices. (See Note.) Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

6. Bake until surface is dry and edges are set, 10 to 15 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

NOTE: Mix-ins can make slicing cookies difficult. Use a serrated knife, or the sharpest knife you have. Make sure your mix-ins are finely chopped so the knife isn't fighting anything to get through. If the dough does crack or break apart, don't panic. You can press the dough back together, and it will still bake beautifully.

SPICED CRANBERRY-ORANGE COOKIES

Makes about 24 cookies

Somewhere between a sugar cookie and a shortbread, these slice-and-bakes channel the crisp, chewy-edged classics of bakery tins past but push them forward with the addition of Chinese five-spice and a clever, fragrant sugar crust. It all starts with a simple but essential move: whisking sugar with orange zest. This friction unlocks the zest's oils, infusing the sugar with vivid citrus perfume. Half of that zesty sugar goes into the dough; the rest gets pressed into the chilled log just before slicing, forming a glittery, citrus-crunch halo around each cookie as it bakes. Chinese five-spice powder—a blend typically made from star anise, fennel seed, Szechuan peppercorn, cloves, and cinnamon—adds a whisper of complexity here. It's warming without being overpowering, grounding the brightness of the cranberries and citrus with a savory note that feels wintry and nostalgic. As for the cranberries, finely chopping them ensures even distribution in the dough so there's a little chew in every addictive bite.

……

⅔	**cup plus ½ cup (233 grams) granulated sugar**
1	**tablespoon (6 grams) orange zest**
½	**cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
1	**large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
1½	**cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
¼	**teaspoon Chinese five-spice powder**
½	**cup (60 grams) dried cranberries, finely chopped**

1. In a small bowl, whisk together sugar and orange zest until fragrant, about 1 minute. Reserve ½ cup (100 grams) sugar mixture in a shallow dish; cover.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and remaining ⅔ cup (133 grams) sugar mixture at medium speed until pale and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape paddle and bottom and sides of bowl. Beat in egg and vanilla, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.

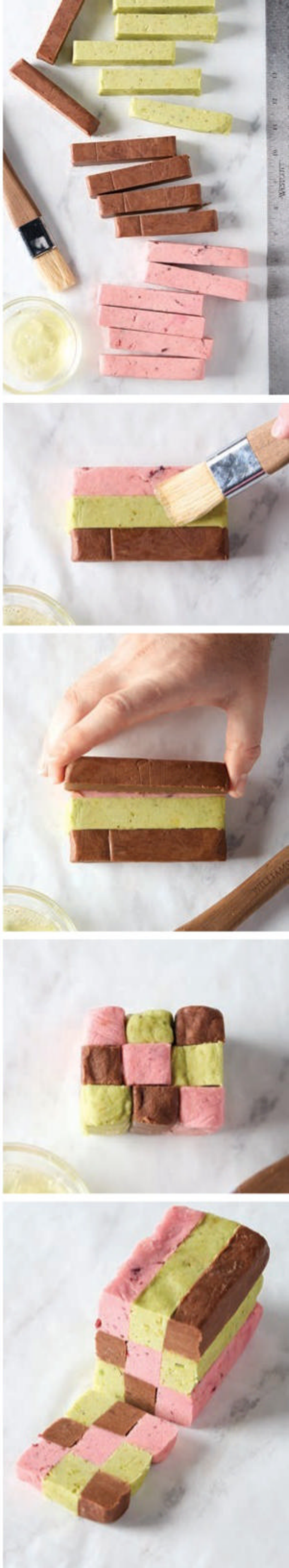
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, salt, and five-spice. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until just combined. Stir in cranberries until just combined.

4. Turn out dough onto a piece of parchment paper, and shape into a 9-inch-long log. Wrap dough in parchment, tightly twisting ends. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 3 days, or freeze for up to 3 months.

5. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

6. Roll dough log in reserved sugar mixture, pressing to adhere. Using a sharp knife, cut log crosswise into 18 (½-inch-thick) slices, and place 1 inch apart on prepared pans.

7. Bake until surface is dry and edges are lightly browned, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.



SPUMONI CHECKERBOARDS

Makes about 15 cookies

These cookies reimagine the iconic Italian American dessert of spumoni ice cream. Each dough is subtly flavored—thanks to cherry preserves, almond extract, pistachios, and cocoa powder—to echo the classic trio of gelato flavors that first found fame in Italy. The technique here is more architectural than your average cookie. The dough is divided into three flavors and chilled into firm rectangles before being sliced and stacked into a Neapolitan-like mosaic. Each slab must be square and solid to allow clean slicing and neat stacking, preventing wonky layers and preserving the clean color lines that give these cookies their charm. A brush of egg white on each layer bonds the stripes into one cohesive (and mesmerizing) bite.

* * *

1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
½ teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt
1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
½ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract
2½ cups (313 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (16 grams) all-purpose flour, divided
2 tablespoons (40 grams) cherry preserves*
1 drop pink gel food coloring
2 tablespoons (10 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder
¼ cup (35 grams) raw pistachios, finely chopped
¼ teaspoon (1 gram) almond extract
2 to 3 drops green gel food coloring
1 large egg white (30 grams)

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, sugar, and salt at medium speed until light and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in egg until combined; scrape sides of bowl. Beat in vanilla; scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, gradually add 2½ cups (313 grams) flour, beating until just combined.
2. Divide dough among 3 bowls (about 260 grams each). Add preserves and remaining 2 tablespoons (16 grams) flour to first bowl, gently kneading or stirring with a rubber spatula until combined; tint with pink food coloring as desired.
3. Add cocoa to second bowl, gently kneading or stirring with a rubber spatula until combined.
4. Add pistachios and almond extract to third bowl, gently kneading or stirring with a rubber spatula until combined; tint with green food coloring as desired. Shape each dough into a 4½x4-inch rectangle (¾ inch thick). (The size is important; try to keep the sides as straight and squared as possible.) Wrap each in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until firm, at least 2 hours, preferably overnight.
5. Trim sides of chilled doughs to straighten. Slice each slab into 6 (4x¾-inch) strips. Lay down one of each color (brown, green, and pink), gently pressing to adhere. Using a pastry brush, lightly brush egg white on surface, and gently press strips together to adhere. Repeat with 3 more alternating strips and more egg white. Top with final layer of alternating strips. Gently press sides of log to adhere everything. Repeat with remaining strips to give you 2 (4-inch-long) logs. Wrap each in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until cold, at least 2 hours.
6. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
7. Using a sharp knife, trim ends of logs. Cut logs crosswise into ½-inch-thick slices, and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
8. Bake, one pan at a time, until edges are golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

**We used Bonne Maman® Cherry Preserves.*

RUM RAISIN COOKIES

Makes 14 cookies

The magical technique of these cookies lies in the use of a food processor: Flour and butter are blitzed just enough to create a sandy, tender texture without overworking the dough. The raisins are added before the butter to coat them in flour and keep them from clumping. It's a clever trick that ensures even distribution and a balanced bite. Microwaving the raisins with rum is another time-saver—no need to soak them overnight when a quick steam coaxes out the alcohol's fragrance and fast-tracks absorption. And don't skip the double sugar toss: once while warm, once after cooled. That final coating clings better when the cookies are no longer giving off steam, creating the perfect snowy finish. Freeze the log and bake as desired; it's the sort of treat you'll want all winter long.

* * *

½	**cup (80 grams) golden raisins**
2	**tablespoons (30 grams) dark rum**
1¾	**cups (219 grams) all-purpose flour**
⅔	**cup (133 grams) granulated sugar**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
¼	**teaspoon ground cinnamon**
⅔	**cup (150 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
2	**teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**

Confectioners' sugar, for coating

1. In a small microwave-safe bowl, heat raisins and rum on high until rum begins to steam, 1 to 2 minutes. Cover and let stand, stirring occasionally, until raisins have plumped and absorbed most of rum, 30 minutes to 1 hour.

2. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse flour, granulated sugar, salt, and cinnamon until combined. Add raisins and rum, and pulse until raisins are coated in flour. Add butter and vanilla, and pulse until combined and a soft dough forms, 1 to 2 minutes.

3. Turn out dough onto a piece of parchment paper, and shape into a 7-inch-long log. Wrap in parchment, tightly twisting ends. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to overnight, or freeze for up to 3 months.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

5. Cut dough log crosswise into 14 (½-inch-thick) slices. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

6. Bake until just golden brown, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Toss warm cookies, one at a time, in confectioners' sugar to coat. Place on a wire rack, and let cool completely.

7. Dredge cooled cookies in confectioners' sugar. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

LONDON FOG COOKIES

Makes 18 cookies

Inspired by the eponymous drink—first dreamed up in a Vancouver, Canada, café in the 1990s—these cookies deliver the same layered comfort: citrusy brightness, bergamot's floral depth, and a creamy vanilla sweetness. What makes these so irresistible? A few deceptively simple moves. Granulated sugar, finely chopped Earl Grey tea, and lemon zest are whisked together by hand—a technique that releases essential oils and infuses the dough with an aromatic complexity. The butter is creamed just enough to lighten the crumb, but not so much that you lose the shortbread-like structure. Instead of leaning too sweet, the cookie stays balanced, leaving room for the white chocolate dip and dusting of tea leaves as the final flourish. They're not just decorative; they deepen the aroma with a lingering whisper of citrusy bergamot.

• • • • •

¾	**cup (150 grams) granulated sugar**
1	**tablespoon (3 grams) finely chopped Earl Grey tea leaves (about 1 tea bag)**
1	**teaspoon (2 grams) lemon zest**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
½	**cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
1	**large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
1½	**cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour**
8	**ounces (227 grams) white chocolate melting wafers, melted according to package directions and cooled slightly**

Garnish: finely chopped Earl Grey tea leaves

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together sugar, tea leaves, lemon zest, and salt by hand. Add butter; using the paddle attachment, beat at medium speed until pale and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in egg and vanilla. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour, beating until just combined.

2. Turn out dough onto a piece of parchment paper, and shape into a 9-inch-long log. Wrap dough in parchment, tightly twisting ends. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours or up to overnight, or freeze for up to 3 months.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. Cut dough log crosswise into 18 (½-inch-thick) slices, and place at least 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

5. Bake until surface is dry and edges are set, 10 to 15 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

6. Dip cooled cookies halfway into melted white chocolate, and place on parchment paper. Garnish with tea leaves, if desired. Let stand until chocolate is set, 10 to 15 minutes. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

FRUITCAKE COOKIES

Makes 20 cookies

This slice-and-bake recipe riffs on the classic holiday fruitcake—born from a centuries-old practice of preserving fruits in sugar and spirits—but reimagines it in crisp, buttery shortbread form. The result: chewy, jewellike flecks of candied cherry, pineapple, and apricot nestled into a golden crumb, with chopped pecans lending warmth and subtle crunch. A splash of alcohol doesn't just replace vanilla; it deepens flavor, enhances aroma, and tempers the sweetness of the candied mix-ins with warmth and complexity. The dough is shaped into a rectangular prism rather than a log, giving you tidy slices that bake evenly and look like tiny golden loaves of fruitcake. Finely chopping the fruit and nuts is key; big chunks will tear the dough as you slice. Don't skip chilling the log, and use your sharpest knife for slicing. These keep beautifully and travel well, making them tailor-made for holiday tins and cookie swaps.

……

¾	**cup (150 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
⅔	**cup (133 grams) granulated sugar**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
1	**large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
1	**tablespoon (15 grams) brandy, bourbon, or rum**
1¾	**cups (219 grams) all-purpose flour**
⅓	**cup (73 grams) candied cherries, finely chopped**
⅓	**cup (73 grams) dried apricots, finely chopped**
⅓	**cup (40 grams) finely chopped pecans**
¼	**cup (35 grams) candied pineapple, finely chopped**
¼	**cup (40 grams) raisins**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, sugar, and salt at medium speed until pale and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in egg and alcohol until combined, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour, beating until just combined. Fold in cherries and all remaining ingredients until combined.

2. Turn out dough onto a piece of parchment paper, and shape into a 10-inch log. Gently flatten top, bottom, and sides of log to create a 10x2½x2-inch rectangle. Fold paper tightly around dough, and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or up to overnight, or freeze for up to 3 months.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. Using a very sharp or serrated knife, cut dough log crosswise into 20 (½-inch-thick) slices, and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

5. Bake until edges are set and lightly browned, 10 to 15 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

Note: *Bake it your own with your favorite dried fruits or nuts; just be sure everything is finely chopped so the log cuts easily. Using alcohol in place of extract gives the cookies a classic, warm flavor. If you'd like to skip it, it can be replaced with vanilla extract.*

MEXICAN HOT CHOCOLATE COOKIES

Makes 18 cookies

Inspired by the bold, bittersweet richness of Mexican hot chocolate, these slice-and-bake cookies balance warmth, spice, and texture. The shortbread dough is scented with cinnamon and just enough red pepper to leave a gentle tingle on the tongue. Dutch process cocoa deepens the flavor without making the cookies overly sweet—its smooth, alkaline profile creates a mellow base that lets the spice shine. Confectioners' sugar creates a finer crumb than granulated sugar, resulting in a dough that holds its shape without spreading. Chilling the dough in a log ensures clean, consistent cuts. And brushing the chilled log with egg white before rolling in white nonpareils? The nonpareils add crunch, yes, but they also contrast visually with the dark cookie interior, giving each slice a polished, eye-catching finish.

• • • • •

1	**cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
1	**cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
2	**cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour**
¼	**cup (21 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder**
1½	**teaspoons (3 grams) ground cinnamon**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
¼ to ½	**teaspoon ground red pepper (see Note)**
	White nonpareils, for rolling
1	**large egg white (30 grams)**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and confectioners' sugar at medium speed until pale and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in vanilla.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, cinnamon, salt, and red pepper. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until just combined.

3. Turn out dough onto a piece of parchment paper, and shape into a 9-inch-long log. Wrap dough in parchment, tightly twisting ends. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to overnight, or freeze for up to 3 months.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

5. In a shallow dish, place nonpareils.

6. Brush egg white onto dough log; roll log in nonpareils, gently pressing to adhere. Cut log crosswise into 18 (½-inch-thick) slices, and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

7. Bake until surface is dry and edges are just set, 10 to 13 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

Note: *For milder heat, use the smaller amount of red pepper.*

RED VELVET PINWHEELS

Makes 24 cookies

These cookies—a striking red and cream swirl—nod to red velvet cake in both color and composition but with crisp edges, a tender bite, and the buttery tang of cream cheese woven straight into the dough. The technique relies on rolling together two contrasting doughs: one vanilla, the other tinted red with cocoa and food coloring. Unlike traditional red velvet, where buttermilk and vinegar balance the sweetness, here it's the cream cheese that provides the signature tang. It doesn't just add flavor—it softens the crumb and lends a pliability that makes the dough dreamily easy to handle. Chilling at every stage—after mixing, after rolling, and once more before baking—is essential. It's what ensures those razor-sharp spirals and clean, uniform slices. The result is a cookie that looks intricate but is straightforward to make, channeling the nostalgia of holiday tins but with a finish worthy of a pâtisserie window.

* * *

1	**cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
1	**cup (200 grams) granulated sugar**
6	**ounces (170 grams) cream cheese, softened**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
2½	**cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour**
1	**tablespoon (5 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder**
2	**teaspoons (8 grams) red liquid food coloring**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until smooth and creamy, 1 to 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add cream cheese, and beat until pale and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in vanilla and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour, beating until just combined.

2. Reserve half of dough (about 430 grams) in a medium bowl. Add cocoa and food coloring to remaining dough in mixer bowl; beat at low speed until just combined and no streaks remain.

3. Shape each dough into a flat square (about 1 inch thick). Wrap each in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until firm, at least 1 hour.

4. Lightly flour 2 sheets of parchment paper. Turn out vanilla dough onto 1 prepared parchment, and roll into a 13x10-inch rectangle (about ⅛ inch thick). Repeat with red dough on remaining prepared parchment. Using parchment to help, carefully invert vanilla dough onto red dough. Gently press to adhere doughs together. Starting with one long side and using parchment to help, roll up dough into a tight spiral. Gently press log together to make sure everything is compressed and fully adhered. Wrap dough in parchment, tightly twisting ends. Refrigerate until cold, at least 2 hours.

5. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

6. Trim about ½ inch from each end of dough log. Cut crosswise into 24 (½-inch-thick) slices, and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

7. Bake until surface is dry and edges are set, about 15 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

Oatmeal-Date Cookies,
PAGE 63

FAMILIAR FLAVORS MEET DECADENT TOPPINGS IN THESE TREATS THAT ARE AS PRETTY AS THEY ARE DELICIOUS

Peppermint
Meltaways,
PAGE 62

glazed, topped, AND swirled

MILK PUNCH COOKIES

Makes about 30 cookies

Inspired by the creamy cocktail that can be found all over New Orleans, Louisiana, these boozy cookies combine bourbon or brandy and a blend of warm spices with condensed milk-infused dough. Rum and dry sherry are good alternatives if you don't like brandy or bourbon.

• • • • •

Cookies:

½ **cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
½ **cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
1 **large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature**
⅓ **cup (118 grams) sweetened condensed milk**
2 **teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**
2 **cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour**
2 **tablespoons (16 grams) cornstarch**
½ **teaspoon (3 grams) baking powder**
½ **teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
½ **teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon**
¼ **teaspoon (1 gram) baking soda**
¼ **teaspoon ground nutmeg**
¼ **teaspoon ground cloves**

Glaze:

2 **cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar**
¼ **cup (60 grams) brandy or bourbon**
½ **teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon**

1. For cookies: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and granulated sugar at medium speed until creamy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl. Beat in egg yolk until combined. Add condensed milk and vanilla, beating just until combined.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cornstarch, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, baking soda, nutmeg, and cloves. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined.

3. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and shape into a disk. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 1 hour or up to overnight. (If refrigerating for longer than 1 hour, dough may need to stand at room temperature for 10 minutes to soften before rolling out.)

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

5. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to ¼-inch thickness. Using desired 2½-inch cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps to use all dough, and place 1½ inches apart on prepared pans.

6. Bake until lightly browned, 12 to 14 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.

7. For glaze: In another medium bowl, whisk together all ingredients until smooth. Dip tops of cooled cookies in glaze, letting excess drip back into bowl. Let stand until glaze is set.

JAM-SWIRLED CREAM CHEESE COOKIES

Makes about 20 cookies

Adding cream cheese to the dough gives these cookies a subtle tang while ensuring that the baked cookie is soft and chewy. Red currant jam adds a bit of tartness that cuts through the richness of the cream cheese, resulting in a perfectly balanced flavor profile. Use your favorite jam or fruit spread, but don't use anything with large fruit pieces because it will be more difficult to roll and cut through.

• • • • •

½	**cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
½	**cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
4	**ounces (113 grams) cream cheese, softened**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
1½	**cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour**
6	**tablespoons (120 grams) red currant jam**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until smooth and creamy, 1 to 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add cream cheese, and beat until pale and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in vanilla and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour, beating until just combined and a dough forms.

2. Turn out dough onto a clean surface, and shape into a 1-inch-thick rectangle. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to overnight.

3. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 15x11-inch rectangle, with one short side closest to you. Spread jam onto dough, leaving a ½-inch border on one short side. Starting with short side opposite border, roll up dough into a log. Wrap in parchment paper, and freeze until firm, 30 to 45 minutes.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

5. Using a sharp knife, trim ends of log. Cut crosswise into ½-inch-thick slices, and place at least 1½ inches apart on prepared pan.

6. Bake until edges are light golden brown, 15 to 18 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

CRÈME DE MENTHE BROWNIES

Makes 18 to 24 bars

Recipe by Sally McKenney. Reprinted with permission from Sally's Baking 101: Foolproof Recipes from Easy to Advanced *by Sally McKenney. Copyright © 2025 by Roger Kamholz. Published by Clarkson Potter, an imprint of the Crown Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, New York.*

In a parade of holiday cookies, these minty brownies took center stage when I was growing up. Mom made them every December, and I distinctly remember fighting with my sisters over who got the last one. It was a sweet sibling rivalry that always ended with a triumphant grin . . . usually not from me, since I was the youngest. I still love making mint brownies like Mom did (and am much more apt to share them now!), because they're downright delicious.

• • • • •

Thick and Fudgy Brownies:

12	**tablespoons (170 grams) unsalted butter, melted and hot**
3	**tablespoons vegetable oil**
1½	**cups (300 grams) granulated sugar**
2	**large eggs, at room temperature**
1	**large egg yolk, at room temperature**
1½	**teaspoons vanilla extract**
1	**cup (84 grams) unsweetened Dutch process cocoa powder**
¾	**cup (94 grams) all-purpose flour**
1	**tablespoon hot water**
½	**teaspoon table salt**
1½	**cups (270 grams) semisweet chocolate chips**

Mint Buttercream:

8	**tablespoons (113 grams) unsalted butter, at room temperature**
2	**cups (240 grams) powdered sugar**
2	**tablespoons green crème de menthe syrup (see Tip)**

Chocolate Topping:

6	**ounces (170 grams) semisweet chocolate, chopped**
4	**tablespoons (56 grams) unsalted butter**
½	**cup (70 grams) chopped Andes chocolate mints**

SALLY'S TIP: Crème de menthe syrup is a green nonalcoholic syrup often sold in the ice cream toppings section of the grocery store. If you can't find it, use a mixture of 2 tablespoons milk, 1¼ teaspoons peppermint extract, and 1 drop of green gel food coloring instead.

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (177°C). Line a 13x9-inch metal baking pan with parchment paper, leaving a few inches of overhang on two opposite sides.

2. Make the brownies: In a large heat-safe bowl, whisk the hot melted butter, oil, and sugar. Let sit for 3 to 5 minutes to slightly cool.

3. Whisk in the eggs, egg yolk, and vanilla. Mix well, then whisk in the cocoa powder, flour, hot water, and salt. The batter should be thick. Fold in the chocolate chips, then spread the batter evenly in the prepared pan.

4. Bake for 20 to 23 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out with only a few moist crumbs. Err on the side of underbaking, as the brownies continue to set as they cool. Cool the brownies completely in the pan set on a cooling rack.

5. Make the mint buttercream: In a large bowl using a handheld or stand mixer fitted with the paddle, beat the butter on medium speed until creamy, about 2 minutes. Scrape down the sides of the bowl as needed. Add the powdered sugar and crème de menthe syrup and beat on low speed for 30 seconds, then increase to medium-high speed and beat for 2 minutes until creamy.

6. Using a small offset icing spatula, spread the mint buttercream in an even layer over the cooled brownies. Place the pan in the refrigerator.

7. Make the chocolate topping: Melt the chocolate with the butter, stirring until smooth and fully combined. Pour the warm chocolate topping over the mint buttercream and spread it into an even layer. Gently tap the pan on the counter a few times to help smooth out the surface. Sprinkle the chopped Andes mints over the chocolate. Refrigerate, uncovered, for at least 1 hour to set the chocolate.

8. Lift the brownies out of the pan by gripping the parchment paper overhang; transfer to a cutting board and cut into squares. Store covered tightly at room temperature for up to 2 days or in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

PEPPERMINT MELTAWAYS

Makes about 18 cookies

Called "meltaways" for a reason, this sweet treat practically dissolves on your tongue the moment it reaches your mouth. Cornstarch in the dough makes these bake into a soft, delightfully puffed shape. Cooling peppermint extract and just a whisper of pink food coloring in the frosting add wonderful holiday cheer to an otherwise simple, shortbread-like flavor profile. Whether you prefer to pipe your frosting on top or stick with a simple spread, don't skip the crushed peppermint garnish.

• • • • •

Cookies:
1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
½ cup (60 grams) confectioners' sugar
½ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon (1 gram) peppermint extract
2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour
¼ cup (32 grams) cornstarch
½ teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt

Frosting:
½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
1½ cups (180 grams) confectioners' sugar
½ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon (1 gram) peppermint extract
Pink gel food coloring

Garnish: crushed peppermint candies

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. For cookies: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and confectioners' sugar at medium speed until light and creamy, 1 to 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in extracts.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cornstarch, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until just combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 30 grams each), and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
4. Bake until surface is dry and edges are set, 10 to 15 minutes. Let cool on pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
5. For frosting: Clean bowl of stand mixer and paddle attachment. Using the paddle attachment, beat butter, confectioners' sugar, vanilla, salt, and peppermint extract at medium speed until smooth and combined, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Tint frosting as desired with food coloring.
6. Spoon frosting into a pastry bag fitted with a ¾-inch French open star piping tip (Ateco #869). Pipe frosting on top of cooled cookies. Garnish with candies, if desired. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

OATMEAL-DATE COOKIES

Makes 18 cookies

Move over, raisins; there's a new fruit in oatmeal cookie town. Dates not only bring a honeyed sweetness to the cookies but also add a jammy texture that plays beautifully against the hearty, nutty old-fashioned oats.

* * *

½	**cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
¾	**cup (165 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
⅓	**cup (67 grams) granulated sugar**
2	**large eggs (100 grams), room temperature**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
2	**cups (200 grams) old-fashioned oats**
1¼	**cups (156 grams) all-purpose flour**
1	**teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon**
¾	**teaspoon (4 grams) baking soda**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
¼	**teaspoon (1 gram) baking powder**
1½	**cups (195 grams) chopped dates**
1	**cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar**
1 to 2	**tablespoons (15 to 30 grams) water**

1. Line rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, brown sugar, and granulated sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in vanilla; scrape sides of bowl.

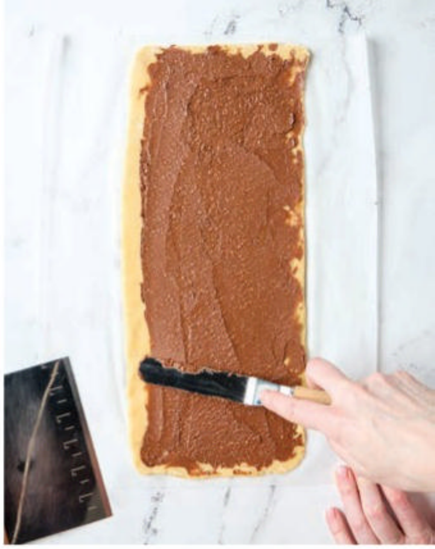
3. In a medium bowl, combine oats, flour, cinnamon, baking soda, salt, and baking powder. With mixer on low speed, gradually add oat mixture to butter mixture, beating until nearly combined. Add dates, and fold with a spatula until combined. Divide dough into 3-tablespoon portions (52 grams each), and place on a prepared pan. Refrigerate until firm, at least 30 minutes.

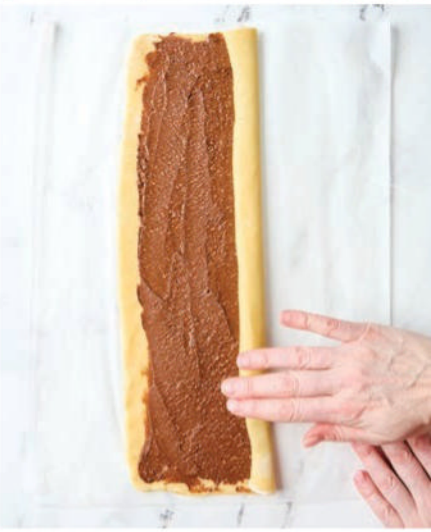
4. Preheat oven to 325°F (170°C).

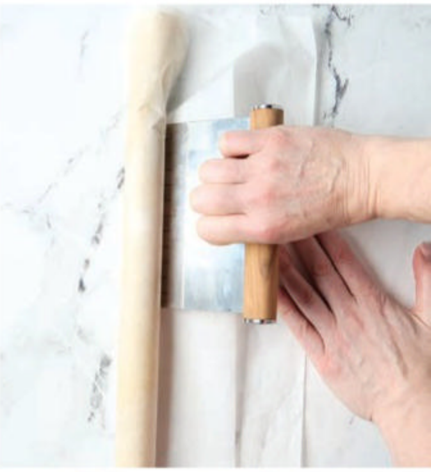
5. Shape dough portions into balls, and place 3 inches apart on prepared pans.

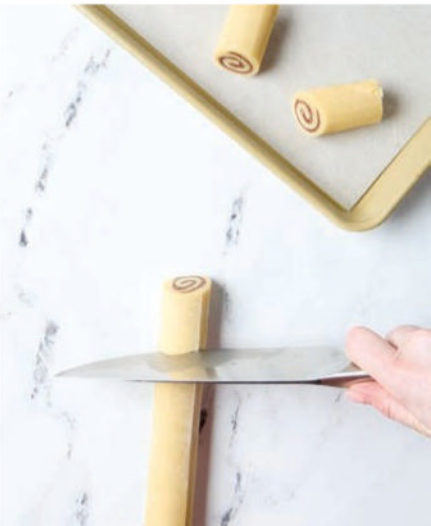
6. Bake until edges are just set but centers seem a little soft, 15 to 17 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

7. In another medium bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water; add up to remaining 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water until glaze is thin and fluid. Dip tops of cookies into glaze, letting excess drip back into bowl. Let stand until glaze sets. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.









BÛCHE DE NOËL COOKIES

Makes 18 cookies

Inspired by the myriad shapes, sizes, and flavors of modern bûche de Noël cakes, we created a handheld cookie version of the time-honored treat. To stick with tradition, our velvety hazelnut filling and chocolate ganache topping make these cookies look like mini tree branches while being utterly indulgent to eat.

* * *

Dough:
2 **cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour**
¾ **cup (90 grams) confectioners' sugar**
½ **teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
¾ **cup (170 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed**
1 **large egg (50 grams)**
1 **teaspoon (6 grams) vanilla bean paste**

Filling:
½ **cup (145 grams) hazelnut chocolate spread***
⅓ **cup (32 grams) hazelnut flour**

Ganache:
4 **ounces (113 grams) semisweet chocolate, chopped**
¼ **cup (73 grams) hazelnut chocolate spread**
¼ **cup (60 grams) heavy whipping cream**
2 **tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter**
¼ **teaspoon kosher salt**

Garnish: holly sprinkles, confectioners' sugar

1. For dough: In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse flour, confectioners' sugar, and salt until combined. Add cold butter, and pulse until butter is worked in and mixture is crumbly. Add egg and vanilla bean paste, and pulse until dough forms. Divide dough in half (about 285 grams each), and shape each half into a flat rectangle. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until cold, at least 2 hours, or up to overnight.
2. For filling: In a medium bowl, fold together hazelnut chocolate spread and hazelnut flour until completely combined.
3. Roll half of dough into a 16x6-inch rectangle, with one long side closest to you. Trim long sides to straighten if needed. Spread about half of filling onto dough, leaving a ¼-inch border on one long side. Starting with long side opposite border, roll up dough into a tight log, using parchment to help you roll. Repeat with remaining dough and remaining filling. Wrap each log in parchment paper, tightly twisting ends. Freeze until firm, about 1 hour.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.
5. Trim ends of dough logs. Cut each crosswise into 9 (1¾-inch-thick) slices. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
6. Bake until edges are set and lightly browned, 17 to 20 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
7. For ganache: In a medium microwave-safe bowl, combine all ingredients; heat on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until chocolate and butter are melted and mixture is smooth and combined.
8. Dip top of 1 cooled cookie into ganache, letting excess drip back into bowl. Place on a sheet of parchment paper. Drag tines of a fork through ganache to resemble tree bark; garnish with holly sprinkles, if desired. Repeat with remaining cookies. Let stand until ganache is set. Garnish with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

**We used Bonne Maman® Hazelnut Chocolate Spread.*

TANTE ERIKA'S CREAMY CHOCOLATE OATMEAL SQUARES

Makes 16 bars

Recipe by Gesine Bullock-Prado. Excerpted from My Harvest Kitchen: A Celebration of Seasonal Cooking and Homesteading. *Copyright © 2025 by Gesine Bullock-Prado. Reprinted with permission of Countryman Press, an imprint of W. W. Norton & Co., Inc.*

Almost nothing beats a steaming bowl of oatmeal, lightly sweetened with the deep, caramelly flavor of brown sugar, on a cold morning. These oatmeal squares take the comfort of a classic breakfast and turn it into a decadent dessert bar. A rich, creamy center consisting of melty chocolate and thick sweetened condensed milk perfectly complements the simple flavor and slight chew of the oatmeal cookie exterior.

• • • • •

2½ cups (300 grams) unbleached all-purpose flour
2 cups (178 grams) old-fashioned (not quick cook) rolled oats
1½ cups (319 grams) light brown sugar, firmly packed
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon fine sea salt
8 ounces (226 grams) unsalted butter, softened

For the Filling
2 cups (340 grams) bittersweet chocolate chips (I use Guittard)
14 ounces sweetened condensed milk
1 ounce (28 grams) unsalted butter, softened
½ teaspoon fine sea salt
2 teaspoons vanilla bean paste

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a half sheet pan with parchment.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine flour, oats, brown sugar, baking soda, and salt. Give a quick mix to combine and then add the butter. Mix on low speed until the mixture starts to get crumbly. Sprinkle 4 cups of the flour mixture into the prepared pan and, using your hands, press into an even layer in the pan. Set aside.
3. In a saucepan, add the chocolate, sweetened condensed milk, butter, and salt. Stir over low heat until the butter and chocolate have completely melted and the mixture is combined. Take from the heat and stir in the vanilla.
4. Immediately pour the filling mixture over the prepared crust in the sheet pan, using a small offset spatula to even out the mixture. Work quickly.
5. Crumble the remaining flour mixture evenly over the filling and bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until the topping is golden brown. Cool and cut into squares. Store in an airtight container up to a month.

PEPPERMINT-GLAZED BLACK COCOA COOKIES

Makes about 18 cookies

Black cocoa has a smooth, mild, and less bitter chocolate flavor; in baked goods, it gives you rich, deep flavor and a dramatically dark color. A cooling mint glaze creates a treat that's reminiscent of beloved Girl Scouts Thin Mints but with a satisfyingly soft texture—and year-round accessibility.

* * *

Cookies:

1	**cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
1½	**cups (330 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
2	**large eggs (100 grams), room temperature**
2	**teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**
3	**cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour**
⅔	**cup (50 grams) black cocoa powder**
1	**teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**

Glaze:

1	**cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar**
1 to 2	**tablespoons (15 to 30 grams) water**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) peppermint extract**

1. For cookies: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and brown sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until combined after each addition and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in vanilla.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until just combined and no dry streaks remain.

3. Turn out dough onto a clean surface, and gently knead until dough is smooth and combined. Flatten into a disk, and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour, or up to overnight. (If refrigerating longer than 1 hour, let dough stand at room temperature for about 10 minutes to soften before rolling out.)

4. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.

5. On a lightly floured surface, roll half of dough to ⅜-inch thickness. (Keep remaining dough covered until ready to use to prevent it from drying out.) Using a well-floured 3-inch cookie press (see Note), firmly press designs into dough as desired. Using a 3-inch round cutter, cut rounds from dough, and place at least 1½ inches apart on prepared pans. Repeat with remaining dough, rerolling scraps to use all dough.

6. Bake, one pan at a time, until edges are just set, 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool on pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

7. For glaze: In another medium bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar, 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water, and peppermint extract; add up to remaining 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water until glaze is fluid. Using a pastry brush, brush glaze onto cooled cookies. Let stand until glaze is set. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

Note: *We used Nordic Ware Yuletide and Starry Night Cookie Stamps.*

TIRAMISÙ COOKIES

Makes 18 cookies

A beloved Italian dessert gets a cookie-style makeover in this fun twist on a classic. Mimicking espresso-soaked ladyfingers, the base of these cookies is slightly cakey and features a yummy blend of honey and espresso powder to capture the light, airy texture and subtly sweet yet slightly bitter taste of the original. A generous helping of our sweetened whipped mascarpone topping is truly the star of the show, with the mild, almost milky flavor of rich mascarpone perfectly balanced by a delicate dusting of indulgent cocoa powder.

• • • • •

Cookies:

½	**cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
½	**cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
2	**tablespoons (42 grams) honey**
1	**teaspoon (2 grams) espresso powder**
1	**large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
1½	**cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour**
1	**teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**

Topping:

1	**(8-ounce) container (226 grams) mascarpone cheese***
½	**cup (60 grams) confectioners' sugar**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
½	**cup (120 grams) cold heavy whipping cream**
2	**tablespoons (10 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder**
½	**teaspoon (1 gram) espresso powder**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.

2. For cookies: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, granulated sugar, honey, and espresso powder at medium speed until light and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in egg and vanilla until combined, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. Add flour mixture to butter mixture, and beat at low speed until just combined and no dry streaks remain, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 28 grams each), and place at least 3 inches apart on prepared pans.

4. Bake, one pan at a time, until puffed and edges are light golden brown, about 10 minutes. Let cool on pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

5. For topping: Clean bowl of stand mixer. Using the whisk attachment, beat mascarpone, confectioners' sugar, and vanilla at medium-low speed until smooth and combined. With mixer on medium-low speed, add cold cream in a slow, steady stream; thoroughly scrape sides of bowl. Beat at medium speed until thick, 2 to 3 minutes. Spoon mascarpone mixture into a pastry bag fitted with a ½-inch round piping tip (Ateco #807). Pipe onto cooled cookies as desired.

6. In a small bowl, whisk together cocoa and espresso powder. Dust on top of cookies. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used BelGioioso® Mascarpone Cheese.*

PFEFFERNÜSSE (GERMAN SPICE COOKIES)

Makes 50 cookies

Recipe by Gesine Bullock-Prado. Excerpted from My Harvest Kitchen: A Celebration of Seasonal Cooking and Homesteading. *Copyright © 2025 by Gesine Bullock-Prado. Reprinted by permission of Countryman Press, an imprint of W. W. Norton & Co., Inc.*

I like a bit of kick in my cookies. The spice blend in this traditional German Christmas staple will have you going back for more and more and more. You can feel free to swap in orange or mandarin juice for the lemon juice in the glaze, using the winter fruit that's on hand to give this buttery cookie the citrus lift of your choice.

• • • • •

3	**cups (360 grams) unbleached all-purpose flour**
½	**cup (48 grams) blanched almond flour**
1	**teaspoon baking powder**
1	**teaspoon fine sea salt**
⅛	**teaspoon ground cinnamon**
⅛	**teaspoon ground anise seed**
⅛	**teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg**
⅛	**teaspoon ground white pepper**
⅛	**teaspoon ground ginger**
⅛	**teaspoon ground cloves**
½	**cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
8	**tablespoons (113 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature**
¼	**cup plus 1 tablespoon (105 grams) honey**
1	**large egg**

For the Glaze

1	**cup (113 grams) confectioners' sugar**
1	**tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice (or citrus juice of your choice)**

1. Whisk together the flour, almond flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, anise, nutmeg, white pepper, ginger, and cloves in a large bowl. Set aside.

2. Combine the granulated sugar and butter in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Mix on medium speed until smooth. Add the honey and continue to mix until incorporated, then add the egg and continue to mix until combined. Add the flour mixture all at once and mix on low speed until the mixture just comes together. Transfer the mixture to a piece of plastic wrap and press the dough together, incorporating any dry bits. Cover well and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

3. Line a sheet pan with parchment. Preheat the oven to 300°F (150°C).

4. Using a tablespoon-size cookie scoop, scoop rounds of dough and gently roll with your hands to smooth. Place on the prepared pan, spacing the cookies about 1 inch apart. Bake for 15 minutes, or until barely browning at the very edges. Remove from the oven and allow to cool completely.

5. Make the Glaze: Whisk together the confectioners' sugar and lemon juice in a small bowl until smooth. Brush the glaze over the cooled cookies. Allow glaze to set before transferring the cookies to an airtight container to store for up to 2 weeks.

BEGGARS' BARS

Makes 12 servings

Recipe by Dorie Greenspan. Excerpted from Dorie's Anytime Cakes *by Dorie Greenspan.* *Copyright © 2025 by Dorie Greenspan. Reprinted with permission by Harvest, an imprint of HarperCollins. All rights reserved.*

These soft chocolaty bars were inspired by one of the simplest French bonbons I know, the mendiant. Mendiant means "beggar" in French, and the candy—a small round of chocolate sparingly topped with dried fruits and nuts—is bound up with the practices of four religious orders whose communities take vows of poverty and depend on alms to sustain them. Traditionally the chocolates have had raisins for the Augustinians, hazelnuts for the Carmelites, figs for the Franciscans and almonds for the Dominicans. But as is often true in the kitchen, tradition gets bent—sometimes out of necessity, often out of restless creativity—and today it's common to find mendiants with pistachios or walnuts, apricots or even pineapple, and any combination of toppers perked up with candied citrus peel. In the French tradition of breaking tradition, I was inspired by mendiants but not tied to them when I made this cake.

You can think of the base as a brownie, but if you do, please think of it as a maximal brownie—there's nothing in the batter except a bit of enlivening black pepper to interrupt the pleasure of full-on dark chocolate. For the fruits and nuts, I've gone with custom and chosen raisins and figs, but I added crystallized ginger. Aside from the obvious surprise and zip of the ginger, the morsels (I kept them tiny) perfume the cake. For the nuts, I often use almonds and walnuts, because that's what I've always got in the house, but, of course, they're up for grabs.

• • • • •

For the Cake

½ cup (80 grams) moist, plump raisins (see below)
¼ cup (40 grams) moist, plump crystallized (or stem) ginger (see below), cut into bits
⅔ cup (90 grams) all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
½ teaspoon fine sea salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
8 tablespoons (4 ounces/113 grams) unsalted butter, cut into 8 pieces
2 tablespoons neutral oil
5 ounces (142 grams) semisweet or bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
⅔ cup (133 grams) sugar
3 cold large eggs
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

For the Topping

½ cup (85 grams) chocolate chips
3 to 5 tablespoons chopped nuts (see opposite page), preferably lightly toasted
6 to 8 moist, plump dried figs
1 or 2 chunks crystallized ginger
1 or 2 tablespoons moist, plump raisins

1. To make the cake: Center a rack in the oven and preheat it to 325 degrees F. Coat an 8-x-8-inch baking pan with baker's spray or butter it, dust with flour and tap out the excess. Run a sheet of parchment paper over the bottom and up two opposite sides of the pan, leaving enough paper to use as handles for unmolding the cake.

2. If you haven't already soaked the raisins and ginger (or whatever fruit you've chosen), give them a soak now, drain and pat dry.

3. Whisk the flour, cocoa powder, salt and pepper together.

4. Put the pieces of butter in a medium saucepan, pour in the oil and scatter over the chocolate. Place the pan over the lowest heat and cook, stirring often, until the butter and chocolate have melted. Take care not to use too much heat, or the mixture will separate. Alternatively—and requiring less vigilance—put the ingredients in a heatproof bowl set over a pan of gently simmering water (the bottom of the bowl should not touch the water) and heat, stirring occasionally, until the butter and chocolate have melted.

5. Remove the pan (or bowl) from the heat and whisk in the sugar—the mixture may turn grainy, but that's fine. Wait a minute or two, then beat in the cold eggs one by one. By the time the third egg is in, the mixture should be beautiful—thick and shiny. Give it a few brisk beats with the whisk and then beat in the vanilla. Still working with the whisk, or switching to a flexible spatula if you prefer, gradually and gently stir in the flour-cocoa mixture until almost completely incorporated. Drop in the raisins and ginger and stir to mix them in evenly. Scrape the batter into the pan and smooth the top.

6. Bake the cake for 22 minutes; it's hard to test these bars—better to go by time and faith. (As soon as the cake goes in, make sure that everything that you need for the topping is at hand.)

7. Remove the pan from the oven (turn off the oven) and sprinkle the chips as evenly as you can over the top of the cake. Slide the

pan back into the oven and leave it for 2 minutes. Remove the pan from the oven and transfer it to a rack, then grab an offset spatula and “ice” the cake with the melted chocolate. Don’t worry about getting a perfectly smooth finish here—it will be covered. Working quickly—you want the chocolate to still be wet—press the fruit and nuts into the top of the cake. I usually add the fruit first and press it down lightly, then scatter over the nuts—but there’s no right way here. If the chocolate has set—unlikely, but possible—slip the pan back into the oven and let it sit with the door open for another minute or so, then remove and give the topping a couple of love pats to make sure it’s nestled into the chocolate.

8. Leave the cake on the rack for 5 minutes, then run a table knife around the sides and, using the parchment handles, lift the cake out of the pan and onto the rack. This is a very soft cake, so work deliberately, and don’t try to remove the parchment until the cake has cooled. (The cake is never easy to cut because it’s got so much good fruit in and on top of it, but it’s more difficult to cut when it’s still the slightest bit warm). If the chocolate is still wet when you’re ready to cut and serve the cake, you can give it about 10 minutes in the fridge.

STORING: Wrapped well, the cake will keep for up to 4 days at room temperature and for up to 1 month in the freezer; thaw in the wrapper.

A WORD ON DRIED FRUIT: For this cake to be truly delicious, the fruit has to be truly moist. To get the right texture, soak the fruit in a bowl of very hot water for a minute or two (the crystallized ginger and figs might need longer). Drain and pat dry. If you’re going to cut up the fruit, do it after you’ve soaked it. For more flavor, you can add a tablespoon or so of brandy or another alcohol to the water, or soak the fruit in hot tea.

A WORD ON THE GINGER: Crystallized ginger is sugar-coated dried ginger. Sometimes the ginger is thin and oddly shaped and sometimes you can find it diced or in squares. For this recipe, I prefer chunkier pieces. If the pieces are hard, soak them before you cut them down to size. If you have stem ginger—cubes of ginger packed in sugar syrup—you can use it. Rinse it quickly, pat dry and cut.

A WORD ON CHOICES: You can choose whatever fruit you like for the cake and the topping. No matter what I use in the cake—I usually use raisins, cherries or snipped apricots—I always use crystallized ginger. Similarly, you can use whatever nuts you like—almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, pistachios and even pine nuts are all good choices.

LEMON-GLAZED GINGERBREAD COOKIES

Makes about 24 cookies

Citrus might not be the first flavor you think of combining with gingerbread, but it's truly delicious! The refreshing zing of lemon zest in the cookie dough and fresh juice in the glaze is a great contrast to the warming flavors of ginger and molasses in these holiday treats.

* * *

Cookies:
½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
1 teaspoon (2 grams) lemon zest
¼ cup (85 grams) unsulphured molasses
1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
2½ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking soda
1½ teaspoons (3 grams) ground ginger
½ teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt
½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon

Glaze:
1½ cups (180 grams) confectioners' sugar
2 tablespoons (30 grams) fresh lemon juice

Garnish: **white nonpareils, gingerbread men sprinkles**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.

2. For cookies: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, granulated sugar, and lemon zest at medium speed until light and fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in molasses until combined. Beat in egg and vanilla until combined, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, ginger, salt, and cinnamon. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until combined. Using a 1½-tablespoon (about 30 grams) spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

4. Bake until edges are just set, 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.

5. For glaze: In another medium bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and lemon juice until combined. Drizzle onto cooled cookies, and garnish with nonpareils and sprinkles, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

SICILIAN LEMON-ALMOND COOKIES

Makes about 24 cookies

Reminiscent of snowball cookies—with their distinct, crackled exterior that comes from a delicate coating of confectioners' sugar—these sweet cookies require only your hands and a bit of patience. Hand-whisked egg whites give the dough a light, cakey finish, and the combination of bright lemon and sweet almond flavor is a wonderfully cheery treat that will transport you to the sunny Italian coast even on the coldest of winter days.

• • • • •

1	**cup (200 grams) granulated sugar**
2	**teaspoons (5 grams) lemon zest**
2¼	**cups (216 grams) blanched almond flour**
2	**large egg whites (60 grams), room temperature**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) almond extract**

Confectioners' sugar, for coating
Whole almonds, for topping

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together granulated sugar and lemon zest until fragrant, about 1 minute. Whisk in flour.
3. In a large bowl, whisk egg whites until frothy, about 1 minute. Add sugar mixture and almond extract; fold until combined and a dough forms.
4. In another medium bowl, place confectioners' sugar.
5. Using a 1-tablespoon (about 17 grams) spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and roll into balls; roll in confectioners' sugar to coat. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pan. Press 1 whole almond into top of each ball.
6. Bake until cracked and edges are set and very lightly browned, about 15 minutes. Let cool on pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

CHOCOLATE-COVERED MARSHMALLOW COOKIES

Makes 20 cookies

A homemade take on classic Mallomars cookies, these treats layer crisp, spiced gingersnaps with a fluffy Swiss meringue-style marshmallow enrobed in a glossy dark chocolate shell.

• • • • •

2	**large egg whites (60 grams), room temperature**
¾	**cup (255 grams) light corn syrup**
⅓	**cup (67 grams) granulated sugar**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
½	**teaspoon (1 gram) cream of tartar**
1½	**teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract**
20	**Gingersnaps (recipe follows)**
10	**ounces (300 grams) dark chocolate melting wafers**

1. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper; top with a wire rack.

2. In the top of a double boiler, whisk together egg whites, corn syrup, sugar, salt, and cream of tartar. Cook over simmering water, stirring constantly, until sugar dissolves and an instant-read thermometer registers 160°F (71°C), about 7 minutes.

3. Carefully transfer mixture to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Beat at high speed until doubled in volume and stiff peaks form, 3 to 4 minutes. Beat in vanilla.

4. Spoon marshmallow into a pastry bag fitted with a medium round piping tip. Using even pressure, pipe a "kiss" shape onto each Gingersnap. Let stand until marshmallow is set, about 20 minutes.

5. In a medium microwave-safe bowl, heat chocolate on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until melted and smooth. Dip marshmallow-topped Gingersnaps in melted chocolate, and place on prepared rack. (Melted chocolate can also be spooned onto marshmallow if you prefer.) Let stand until chocolate is set. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

GINGERSNAPS

Makes about 60 cookies

1	**cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
1⅓	**cups (267 grams) granulated sugar**
1	**large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
1	**large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract**
⅓	**cup (113 grams) molasses**
3	**cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour**
2½	**teaspoons (13 grams) baking soda**
2½	**teaspoons (5 grams) ground cinnamon**
2½	**teaspoons (5 grams) ground ginger**
¾	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
¼	**teaspoon ground black pepper**
¼	**cup (43 grams) diced crystallized ginger**

1. In the bowl of stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg, egg yolk, and vanilla, beating just until combined. Beat in molasses.

2. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ground ginger, salt, and pepper. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined. Add crystallized ginger, beating until combined.

3. On a heavily floured surface, divide dough in half. Shape each half into a 2-inch-diameter log. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap, and freeze until firm, at least 1 hour, or for up to 3 months. If fully frozen, let thaw in refrigerator before slicing.

4. Preheat oven to 325°F (170°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

5. Working with 1 log at a time, cut crosswise into ¼-inch-thick slices. Place 1 inch apart on prepared pans.

6. Bake until edges are browned, 10 to 14 minutes. Let cool completely on wire racks. Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

Dubai Chocolate Sandwich Cookies, PAGE 97

INDULGENT FLAVORS AND TEXTURES AWAIT INSIDE TO SURPRISE AND SATISFY

filled, stuffed, AND sandwiched

Brown Sugar Sandwich Cookies,
PAGE 88

PIZZICATI

Makes about 20 cookies

Pizzicati*—literally "pinched" in Italian—are delicate, jam-filled butter cookies with their sides gently folded and pressed together like a kiss. These nostalgic treats have long graced Italian holiday tables, especially in the central and southern regions of Italy, where simple pantry ingredients transform into something extraordinary. Cornstarch lightens the crumb, softening the flour's protein and lending the cookies that short, melt-in-your-mouth texture. Vanilla bean paste adds fragrant complexity and gently grounds the brightness of the fruit, whether you're spooning in raspberry, apricot, or fig jam. A brief chill firms the dough for cleaner shaping and prevents spreading in the oven—an essential step to preserve the distinctive "pinch."*

• • • • •

1¼	**cups (156 grams) all-purpose flour**
⅓	**cup (40 grams) confectioners' sugar**
¼	**cup (32 grams) cornstarch**
¼	**teaspoon (1 gram) baking powder**
¼	**teaspoon kosher salt**
½	**cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
1	**large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
1	**teaspoon (6 grams) vanilla bean paste**
3	**tablespoons (about 60 grams) jam, preserves, or fruit spread**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together flour, confectioners' sugar, cornstarch, baking powder, and salt by hand until combined. Add butter; using the paddle attachment, beat at low speed until butter is worked in and mixture is crumbly. Add egg and vanilla bean paste, and beat until a dough forms.

2. Turn out dough onto a clean surface, and gently knead until smooth. Flatten into a disk, and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface. Roll to ¼-inch thickness. Using a 2¼-inch round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps to use all dough, and place 1½ inches apart on prepared pan. Spoon about ½ teaspoon (about 4 grams) desired filling into center of each round. Fold over sides, and firmly pinch in center to seal.

5. Bake until edges are light golden brown, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool on pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Dust with confectioners' sugar. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

BROWN SUGAR SANDWICH COOKIES

Makes about 21 sandwich cookies

These nostalgic dessert sandwiches are all about contrast: a tender, short-edged snap giving way to a truffle-like center. The dough leans heavily on dark brown sugar, which does more than sweeten; its high molasses content introduces both chew and depth, contributing caramel notes that balance the semisweet chocolate filling. Butter, mixed just until creamy but not fluffy, ensures a cookie that's crisp at the edge but delicate enough to yield when sandwiched. Chilling the dough gives the flour time to hydrate, minimizes spread, and allows the butter to resolidify for clean, sharp edges post-bake. Rolling to ⅛-inch thickness ensures the cookies are thin enough to balance the rich filling but not so thin that they lose structure.

• • • • •

¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened
¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar
1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
2½ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon (3 grams) baking powder
½ teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt
Ganache Filling (recipe follows)

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and brown sugar at medium speed until pale and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in egg and vanilla until combined, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until just combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl.

3. Turn out dough onto a clean surface, and knead just until smooth. Shape into a disk, and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate until firm, at least 2 hours.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

5. On a lightly floured surface, roll half of dough to ⅛-inch thickness. (Keep remaining dough covered while you work to prevent it from drying out.) Using a 2½-inch round fluted cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps once. Repeat with remaining dough. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

6. Bake until edges are golden brown and just set, about 10 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely.

7. Spoon Chocolate Ganache Filling into a pastry bag, and cut a ¼-inch opening in tip. Pipe about 2 teaspoons (10 grams) filling each onto flat side of half of cookies. Top with remaining cookies, flat side down. Refrigerate until filling is set before serving, about 20 minutes. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

GANACHE FILLING

Makes about 1¼ cups

8 ounces (227 grams) 55% cacao semisweet chocolate, chopped
½ cup (120 grams) heavy whipping cream
3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter
¼ teaspoon kosher salt

1. In a medium microwave-safe bowl, heat all ingredients on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until chocolate and butter are melted and mixture is smooth. Cover and let cool completely at room temperature. Use immediately.

MARSHMALLOW-STUFFED MOLASSES COOKIES

Makes 24 cookies

Based on the classic American molasses cookie—a Depression-era staple prized for its deep sweetness and spice—this version nods to nostalgia and comfort while sneaking in a modern, joyful twist: a gooey, molten marshmallow core. Whisking molasses with warm water thins it, making it easier to blend and helping hydrate the flour more evenly. With no eggs in the dough, the moisture comes entirely from the molasses and water, yielding a slightly cakier crumb. The key technique here is freezing the dough before baking. If the dough is too soft, the sugar in the marshmallow will melt out before the structure can catch up. Freezing slows everything down, allowing the cookie to set just as the center begins to ooze. And they're meant to be underbaked. If you wait for the marshmallow to fully surface or brown, it's already gone too far. Pull them when they look just set, and let carryover heat do the rest.

……

½	**cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
1	**cup (200 grams) granulated sugar**
3½	**cups (438 grams) all-purpose flour**
1½	**teaspoons (3 grams) ground ginger**
1	**teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda**
1	**teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
½	**teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon**
¼	**teaspoon ground cloves**
¼	**teaspoon ground nutmeg**
1	**cup (336 grams) unsulphured molasses**
¼	**cup (60 grams) hot water (120°F/49°C to 130°F/54°C)**
24	**regular-size marshmallows**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, ginger, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg. In another medium bowl, whisk together molasses and ¼ cup (60 grams) hot water. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with molasses mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating until combined after each addition and stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl.
3. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
4. Using a 1-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop 48 portions of dough (about 20 grams each) directly onto prepared pan. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to overnight.
5. Flatten a single portion of cold dough, and place 1 marshmallow in center. Top with another portion of dough; wrap dough around marshmallow, and roll in your hands to seal. Return to pan. Repeat with remaining dough and remaining marshmallows. Freeze until firm, about 1 hour.
6. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.
7. Place frozen dough balls 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
8. Bake, one pan at a time, until edges are set and marshmallow just begins to peek through top of dough (see Note), 15 to 18 minutes. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Note: *The key to the texture of these cookies it to underbake them slightly and let them finish baking as they cool. If the cookies are baked for too long, the marshmallow bakes out and has an unpleasant texture.*

MAPLE CREME COOKIES

Makes about 10 sandwich cookies

These cookies take inspiration from the Canadian maple leaf-shaped cookies found in every Québecois bakery and corner shop—a post-sledding, lunch box staple. The dough itself is straightforward but brilliant in its use of both granulated sugar and maple syrup. The syrup adds signature maple depth while also lending chew and subtle stickiness to the finished cookie, whereas the sugar gives the dough structure and clean edges. Maple extract—often relegated to back-of-the-cupboard status—earns its keep here, rounding out the real syrup with intensity and consistency that baking temperatures sometimes mute. Chilling the dough is nonnegotiable. It firms up the dough, but more importantly, it helps prevent spreading and allows the flavors to settle and bloom. The filling is a maple frosting with restraint. Salted just enough to cut the sweetness, it's piped thick between the cookies, softening them slightly over time into that elusive, perfect sandwich cookie texture.

• • • • •

½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
⅓ cup (67 grams) granulated sugar
2 tablespoons (30 grams) maple syrup
½ teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt
½ teaspoon (2 grams) maple extract
1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour
Maple Buttercream (recipe follows)

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, sugar, maple syrup, and salt at medium speed until pale and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in maple extract. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour, beating until just combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
2. Turn out dough onto a clean surface, and flatten into a disk. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to ¼-inch thickness. Using a 2¼-inch round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps as necessary, and place at least 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
5. Bake until edges are light golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
6. Spoon Maple Buttercream into a pastry bag, and cut a ½-inch opening in tip. Pipe buttercream onto flat side of half of cookies. Top with remaining cookies, flat side down. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

MAPLE BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 1½ cups

½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
3 tablespoons (45 grams) maple syrup
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon (1 gram) maple extract
1½ cups (360 grams) confectioners' sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, maple syrup, salt, and maple extract at medium speed until smooth, 1 to 2 minutes. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until smooth and combined. Use immediately.

JAM CRUMBLE COOKIES

Makes about 13 cookies

There's something innately nostalgic about a jam-filled cookie. It's part Linzer, part crumble bar, part soft-baked thumbprint, and entirely engineered for contrast: crisp edge, tender middle, gooey center, and that essential sandy crumble on top. The cookie dough itself is structurally sound but short—thanks to a balance of creamed butter and sugar, with just enough leaven (baking powder and baking soda) to lift without spreading. Pressing a wide, shallow well into the center creates a tart-like cavity that holds the jam without overflow. It's a technique borrowed from bakery-style thumbprint cookies but exaggerated for drama and functionality. Then there's the streusel topping. Chilled before baking, it holds its shape in the oven, providing a crunchy-sweet foil to the tang of the jam and the chew of the cookie. Cinnamon is subtle here but anchors the topping with warmth. As for the filling, we give a wink to the seaon with cranberry-cherry preserves, but use any flavor you like or already have on hand.

* * *

Topping:
¼ cup (31 grams) all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar
1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, melted

Dough:
½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
2¼ cups (281 grams) all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon (3 grams) baking powder
½ teaspoon (3 grams) baking soda
½ teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt

½ cup (160 grams) jam or preserves*

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. For topping: In a small bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, cinnamon, and salt. Using a fork, stir in melted butter until well combined and mixture is crumbly. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or until ready to use.
3. For dough: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on medium speed, beat in egg and vanilla until combined.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until just combined and no dry streaks remain.
5. Using a 2-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 45 grams each), and roll into balls. Place 3 inches apart on prepared pans. Press a 2-inch-wide well into each portion, leaving a slight border around edges. Spoon 1 heaping teaspoon (about 12 grams) jam or preserves into each well. Sprinkle topping on top of each.
6. Bake until edges of cookie and streusel are golden brown and set, about 15 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

**We used Bonne Maman® Cranberry-Cherry Preserves.*

1 TSP-5ml

CUCCIDATI COOKIE CAKE

Makes 1 (9-inch) cookie cake

Filled with a lightly spiced fig and nut mixture,
this is a delectable twist on the classic Italian rolled cookie.

* * *

Dough:

3	**cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour**
½	**cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
2	**teaspoons (6 grams) kosher salt**
1½	**teaspoons (8 grams) baking powder**
1	**cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
2	**large eggs (100 grams), room temperature**
2	**teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**

Filling:

1½	**cups (210 grams) dried figs, stemmed and chopped**
¼	**cup plus 2 tablespoons (90 grams) water**
¼	**cup (85 grams) honey**
1½	**teaspoons (3 grams) orange zest**
¼	**cup (60 grams) fresh orange juice**
¾	**cup (105 grams) pitted dates, finely chopped**
¾	**cup (85 grams) chopped toasted walnuts**
⅓	**cup (43 grams) raisins**
1	**teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
1	**teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon**
¼	**teaspoon ground nutmeg**
¼	**teaspoon ground cloves**

Glaze:

2	**cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar**
3	**tablespoons (45 grams) whole milk**

Garnish: rainbow nonpareils

1. For dough: In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse flour, granulated sugar, salt, and baking powder until combined. Add butter, eggs, and vanilla; pulse just until a smooth dough forms. (Do not overprocess.)

2. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and knead for 2 to 3 minutes. Shape two-thirds of dough (about 544 grams) into a disk. Shape remaining one-third of dough (about 272 grams) into a disk. Wrap each in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to overnight.

3. For filling: In a medium saucepan, cook figs, ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons (90 grams) water, honey, and orange juice over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until figs are fork-tender, about 10 minutes. Transfer mixture to the work bowl of a food processor. Add orange zest, dates, walnuts, raisins, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves, and process until smooth. Cover until ready to use.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray a 9-inch round cake pan with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pan with parchment paper.

5. On a lightly floured surface, roll larger dough disk into a 13-inch circle. Carefully transfer to prepared pan, pressing into bottom and up sides of pan. (If dough breaks, press it together and smooth it out with your fingers.) Spread filling into prepared crust. Using a small paring knife, trim excess dough to ¼ inch above top of filling. Using your fingers, gently fold ¼-inch edge of dough over filling, and smooth down slightly with your fingertips.

6. On a lightly floured surface, roll remaining dough disk into a 10-inch circle. Using a sharp knife and a 9-inch round cake pan as a guide, cut dough into a 9-inch circle. Carefully place dough on filling. Using your fingers or a fork, lightly press down on edges of dough to seal. Using a fork or wooden pick, gently poke a few holes in top of dough.

7. Bake until top is lightly browned, 40 to 45 minutes. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Carefully remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

8. For glaze: In a medium bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and milk until smooth; spread onto cooled cookie. Garnish with nonpareils, if desired. Let stand until glaze is set, 15 to 20 minutes. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

DUBAI CHOCOLATE SANDWICH COOKIES

Makes about 14 sandwich cookies

Inspired by Dubai chocolate bars, this decadent dessert combines chocolate cookie dough, a crunchy, nutty filling, and a drizzle of ganache. Kataifi, common in Levantine and Turkish sweets, is used here not as a structural base but as a mix-in—an unexpected technique, but one that adds crispness and complexity to every bite. It's that balance that makes these cookies something truly special. The dough is deliberately bold: rich with cocoa and restrained in leaven, built on a creamed butter and sugar foundation for lift, and then chilled for structure. Beating in the eggs one at a time ensures emulsification, and a 30-minute rest firms the dough for clean shape and even bake. But the star here is the nut and phyllo filling. You begin by toasting kataifi in butter and then fold it into a pistachio praline made by blitzing candied nuts and sesame seeds into a thick, marzipan-like paste. It's rich, chewy, and just barely salty. A final drizzle of milk chocolate ganache adds softness and shine, and reserved shards of pistachio brittle bring crunch and contrast.

* * *

1½	**cups (340 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
1¼	**cups (275 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
¾	**cup (150 grams) granulated sugar**
3	**large eggs (150 grams), room temperature**
2	**teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**
3¼	**cups (406 grams) all-purpose flour**
1	**cup (85 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder**
1½	**teaspoons (5 grams) kosher salt**
1	**teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda**
	Pistachio Kataifi Filling (recipe on opposite page)
2	**ounces (57 grams) milk chocolate, finely chopped**
3	**tablespoons (45 grams) heavy whipping cream**
	Garnish: reserved chopped candied pistachios

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Reduce mixer speed to medium-low. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla.

2. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, salt, and baking soda. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined. (Do not overmix.) Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

3. Preheat oven 350°F (180°C). Line rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. Using a 3-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 45 grams each), and place at least 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

5. Bake, one pan at a time, until edges are set and tops are puffed and dry, 12 to 14 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Using a thin spatula, remove from pan, and let cool completely on wire racks.

6. Place a scant ¼ cup (about 56 grams) Pistachio Kataifi Filling each onto flat side of half of cookies. Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on top of filling, gently pressing to adhere.

7. In a microwave-safe bowl, heat chocolate and cream on high in 20-second intervals, stirring between each, until chocolate is melted and mixture is combined. Transfer ganache to a pastry bag, and cut a small opening in tip. Drizzle ganache onto sandwich cookies, and garnish with reserved candied pistachios, if desired. Serve immediately. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

PISTACHIO KATAIFI FILLING

Makes about 3 cups

- **3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter**
- **8 ounces (227 grams) frozen kataifi (shredded phyllo dough), thawed and roughly chopped**
- **1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar**
- **¼ cup (60 grams) water**
- **2 tablespoons (42 grams) corn syrup**
- **1½ cups (222 grams) roasted unsalted pistachios**
- **1 tablespoon (9 grams) sesame seeds**
- **½ teaspoon (3 grams) baking soda**
- **½ teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
- **½ cup (120 grams) heavy whipping cream**
- **⅓ cup (40 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- **¼ cup (57 grams) unsalted butter, melted**
- **3 to 4 drops green gel food coloring (optional)**

1. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a large skillet, melt butter over medium-low heat. Add kataifi, and cook, stirring constantly, until golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Remove from heat; place toasted kataifi on prepared pan, and let cool completely.
3. Line a rimmed baking sheet with heavy-duty foil; lightly spray with cooking spray.
4. In a medium saucepan, stir together granulated sugar, ¼ cup (60 grams) water, and corn syrup. (Mixture should resemble wet sand.) Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring just until sugar dissolves. (Do not stir once mixture starts to boil.) Cook, brushing down sides of pan with a pastry brush dipped in water, until mixture is a light amber color and an instant-read thermometer registers 300°F (149°C) to 310°F (154°C), 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat, and quickly stir in pistachios, sesame seeds, baking soda, and salt. Pour onto prepared pan. Using a heatproof spatula, carefully spread mixture into a single layer. Let cool completely.
5. Using a large knife or your hands, roughly chop or break candied pistachio mixture into smaller pieces; reserve 2 to 3 tablespoons (about 20 to 30 grams) for garnish, if desired.
6. In the work bowl of a food processor, process remaining candied pistachio mixture until a thick, dough-like paste forms, 4 to 6 minutes. Add cream, confectioners' sugar, melted butter, and food coloring (if using), and process until mixture is smooth, 2 to 4 minutes. Transfer pistachio mixture to a large bowl, and stir in toasted kataifi. Use immediately.

ITALIAN CREAM THUMBPRINTS

Makes 24 cookies

These cookies are Italian cream cake miniaturized. The dough comes together in a food processor, which minimizes handling and keeps the butter cool. The result? A dough that bakes up short and tender, with crisp edges and excellent shape retention—no spreading, no slumping. Adding the egg and vanilla after pulsing the dry mixture allows the dough to come together just enough, without activating too much gluten. A chill before baking locks in shape—essential for defined indentations and crisp edges. The double press—first with your thumb and then again post-bake with a spoon—ensures deep pockets to hold that signature swirl of cream cheese frosting and toasty toppings. These are celebration cookies that hit all the nostalgic notes in one satisfying bite.

• • • • •

2¼	**cups (281 grams) all-purpose flour**
¾	**cup (150 grams) granulated sugar**
½	**teaspoon (3 grams) baking soda**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
1	**cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
½	**cup (60 grams) finely chopped pecans**
½	**cup (45 grams) sweetened flaked coconut**
1	**large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**

Cream Cheese Filling (recipe follows)
Garnish: toasted pecans, toasted flaked coconut

1. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

2. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse flour, sugar, baking soda, and salt until combined. Add butter, pecans, and coconut, and pulse until just combined and butter is the size of small peas. Add egg and vanilla, and pulse until fully combined and a dough forms around blade.

3. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 30 grams each), and roll into 1-inch balls. Using your thumb, gently press a ½-inch-deep indentation into center of each ball. Freeze until firm, at least 15 minutes, or up to overnight.

4. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).

5. Bake until edges are golden brown, 10 to 13 minutes, rotating pans halfway through baking. Using the end of a wooden spoon, gently press indentations in cookies, if needed. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.

6. Spoon Cream Cheese Filling into a pastry bag, and cut a ½-inch opening in tip. Pipe into center of each cookie; garnish with toasted pecans and toasted coconut, if desired. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

CREAM CHEESE FILLING

Makes about 1¼ cups

4	**ounces (113 grams) cold cream cheese, cubed**
¼	**cup (57 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
2	**cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cold cream cheese at medium speed until smooth. Add butter, and beat until smooth and combined. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until combined. Add vanilla, and beat at medium-high speed until light and fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes.

APPLE CIDER WHOOPIE PIES

Makes 9 whoopie pies

There are few bakes that'll satisfy cozy cravings quite like these Apple Cider Whoopie Pies. For our twist on this Northeastern favorite, tender apple-and-spice cookies are brushed with butter and dipped in a sparkly spiced sugar before being sandwiched with luscious Cream Cheese Buttercream. Don't forget your mug of hot cider to enjoy alongside them.

* * *

¾	**cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
¾	**cup (165 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
1	**large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
3	**cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour**
1	**tablespoon (6 grams) plus ¾ teaspoon (2 grams) apple pie spice, divided**
2	**teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder**
½	**teaspoon (3 grams) baking soda**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
½	**cup (160 grams) Boiled Cider (recipe follows)**
¾	**cup (150 grams) granulated sugar**
1	**tablespoon (14 grams) unsalted butter, melted**
Cream Cheese Buttercream (recipe on opposite page)	

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and brown sugar at medium speed until creamy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in egg until combined.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, 1 tablespoon (6 grams) pie spice, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with Boiled Cider, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. (Batter will be thick.) Using a 3-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop batter level, and place at least 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

4. Bake until bottom edges are light golden brown and tops are dry, 12 to 14 minutes, rotating pans halfway through baking. Let cool completely on pans.

5. In a small bowl, stir together granulated sugar and remaining ¾ teaspoon (2 grams) pie spice.

6. Working with 1 at a time, lightly brush top and edges of each cooled cookie with melted butter. Place, top side down, in sugar mixture, making sure top and edges are coated. Return to pans. (Sprinkle remaining sugar mixture on tops as needed for any areas where there might have been too much butter.)

7. Place Cream Cheese Buttercream in a pastry bag fitted with a ½-inch round piping tip (Ateco #807). Pipe buttercream onto flat side of half of cookies. Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on buttercream. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

BOILED CIDER

Makes 1 cup

8	**cups (1,956 grams) apple cider**

1. In a large saucepan, bring cider to a boil over medium-high heat; cook, checking frequently, until cider is the consistency of maple syrup and reduced to 1 cup, 1 hour to 1 hour and 20 minutes. Pour mixture into a heatproof liquid-measuring cup; let cool completely before measuring and using. (If not using the same day, cover and refrigerate; let come to room temperature before using.)

PRO TIP: Boiled Cider can be made well in advance and refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 3 months. This recipe makes enough for a double batch of whoopie pies. You can also stir the extra into cocktails or tea, drizzle onto ice cream and desserts, or swirl into yogurt or oatmeal for breakfast.

CREAM CHEESE BUTTERCREAM

Makes 3 cups

- ½ **cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 1 **(8-ounce) package (226 grams) cream cheese, softened**
- 4 **cups (480 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- ½ **teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter at medium speed until smooth, about 1 minute. Add cream cheese, and beat until smooth and combined, stopping to scrape paddle and bottom and sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until just combined. Beat in vanilla; increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until light and fluffy, about 30 seconds.

CHOCOLATE-COVERED CHERRY THUMBPRINTS

Makes 30 cookies

Recipe by Sally McKenney. Reprinted with permission from Sally's Baking 101: Foolproof Recipes from Easy to Advanced *by Sally McKenney. Copyright © 2025 by Roger Kamholz. Published by Clarkson Potter, an imprint of the Crown Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, New York.*

Sweet maraschino cherries strike just the right flavor balance in these deeply chocolatey cookies. I always love thumbprint cookies because they seem fancy and elevated, but you don't need any special decorating equipment or skills . . . just your thumb! One quick tip for these brownie-like treats: The dough gets a little sticky when shaping, so wipe your hands as needed as you work.

* * *

30	**maraschino cherries, without stems**
1¼	**cups (156 grams) all-purpose flour**
⅔	**cup (56 grams) unsweetened natural cocoa powder**
1	**teaspoon baking soda**
⅛	**teaspoon table salt**
8	**tablespoons (113 grams) unsalted butter, at room temperature**
½	**cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
½	**cup (100 grams) firmly packed brown sugar**
1	**large egg, at room temperature**
1	**teaspoon vanilla extract**
1	**tablespoon juice from the maraschino cherry jar**
¾	**cup (128 grams) mini chocolate chips**
4	**ounces (113 grams) semisweet chocolate, finely chopped**

1. Place the cherries on a paper towel-lined plate and gently blot any excess moisture. If your cherries are on the larger side, use only 15 and slice them in half. Set aside.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, and salt.

3. In a large bowl using a handheld or stand mixer fitted with the paddle, beat the butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar on medium-high speed until the mixture is light and creamy, about 3 minutes. Add the egg and vanilla and beat on high speed until combined, about 1 minute. Scrape down the sides of the bowl as needed. Add the flour mixture and beat on low speed until combined. Beat in the maraschino cherry juice and mini chocolate chips. The dough should be thick and tacky.

4. Cover the dough tightly and refrigerate it for at least 3 hours or up to 3 days.

5. Preheat the oven to 350°F (177°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats. If the dough has chilled for longer than 3 hours, let it sit at room temperature for about 20 minutes before rolling and baking.

6. Scoop and roll the chilled cookie dough into balls, about a heaping tablespoon (22 grams) each, and use your thumb to make an indent in the centers. Arrange them 2 to 3 inches apart on the prepared baking sheets. Place a cherry (or half a cherry) into the indent of each dough ball.

7. Bake for 12 to 14 minutes or until the edges of the cookies are set. Cool the cookies on the baking sheet for 5 minutes before transferring to a cooling rack to cool completely.

8. Melt the chocolate. Drizzle the tops of the cookies with melted chocolate. Refrigerate for 20 minutes or until the chocolate has set. Store covered tightly at room temperature for up to 2 days or in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

LINZER COOKIE TORTE

Makes 1 (9½-inch) cookie

Linzer cookie dough is reimagined as a buttery, lightly spiced, and slightly citrusy crust, with a generous slathering of berry preserves spread throughout the middle for a classic jammy note. Topped with a cutout crust and dusted with confectioners' sugar, this torte is sure to impress.

* * *

1	**cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature**
⅔	**cup (133 grams) granulated sugar**
⅓	**cup (73 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
2	**large eggs (100 grams), room temperature and divided**
¾	**teaspoon (5 grams) vanilla bean paste**
½	**teaspoon (1 gram) packed lemon zest**
2½	**cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour**
½	**cup (48 grams) hazelnut flour**
1	**teaspoon (2 grams) ground nutmeg**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
1	**cup (320 grams) seedless blackberry preserves**
1	**tablespoon (15 grams) water**

Garnish: confectioners' sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar at medium speed until creamy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape paddle and bottom and sides of bowl. Beat in 1 egg (50 grams), vanilla bean paste, and lemon zest until well combined.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flours, nutmeg, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined.

3. Turn out dough onto a work surface lightly dusted with all-purpose flour, and divide in half (about 415 grams each). Shape each half into a disk, and wrap each in plastic wrap. Refrigerate until firm, at least 2 hours, or up to overnight.

4. Spray a 9½-inch round fluted removable-bottom tart pan with baking spray with flour.

5. Lightly dust work surface with all-purpose flour; on prepared surface, roll half of dough into a 10-inch circle (about ½ inch thick). Gently transfer to prepared pan, pressing into bottom and ½ inch up sides. Spread preserves in prepared crust.

6. Lightly dust work surface with all-purpose flour; on prepared surface, roll remaining dough into a 10-inch circle (about ½ inch thick). Trim dough into a 9½-inch circle. Using 4-inch and 1-inch diamond-shaped cutters dipped in all-purpose flour, cut center from dough in desired pattern. Using a rolling pin, transfer dough to top of preserves. Using a small knife, trim bottom crust to sit even with top crust. Freeze until firm, about 30 minutes.

7. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

8. In a small bowl, whisk together 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water and remaining 1 egg (50 grams). Using a pastry brush, brush dough with egg wash.

9. Bake until top crust is dry and golden brown, 30 to 35 minutes. Let cool in pan for 15 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Garnish with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Rocky Road
Cookies,
PAGE 113

best OF THE rest

BUTTERY, CRUNCHY, NUTTY, CHUNKY, AND SO MUCH MORE

Reindeer Kisses, PAGE 116

BIZCOCHITOS

Makes about 42 cookies

Bizcochitos, New Mexico's state cookie, are traditionally served at holidays and celebrations such as weddings and baptisms. With Spanish roots, they're known for their spicy, buttery flavor and spiced sugar topping—think snickerdoodles but with a more distinct crunch and a subtle hint of sweet licorice flavor from anise. Although they're most often star-shaped, other common shapes include fleur-de-lis, cross, or circle.

* * *

1	**cup (227 grams) lard (see Note)**
1¼	**cups (250 grams) granulated sugar, divided**
1½	**teaspoons (3 grams) crushed anise seeds**
1	**teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon, divided**
1	**large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
2¾	**cups (344 grams) all-purpose flour**
1½	**teaspoons (8 grams) baking powder**
¾	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat lard, ¾ cup (150 grams) sugar, anise seed, and ½ teaspoon (1 gram) cinnamon at medium speed until pale and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in egg and vanilla until combined, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to lard mixture, beating until just combined and a dough forms. Turn out dough onto a clean surface, and gently knead until dough fully comes together.
4. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to ¼-inch thickness. Using a 4x2-inch diamond-shaped cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps as necessary, and place at least 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
5. In another medium bowl, stir together remaining ½ cup (100 grams) sugar and remaining ½ teaspoon (1 gram) cinnamon. Sprinkle cinnamon sugar onto dough; reserve remaining cinnamon sugar.
6. Bake until edges are set and lightly browned, 10 to 13 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and toss in remaining cinnamon sugar. Let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

Note: *These cookies are traditionally made with lard, which gives them a distinct taste and short, tender texture, but an equal amount of softened unsalted butter or all-vegetable shortening can be substituted.*

FRENCH SALTED BUTTER COOKIES

Makes about 18 cookies

Also known as sablés Breton, *these rich shortbread-like cookies originate from the Brittany region of France, which is known for its high-quality sea salt. A light egg wash before baking gives them their well-known shiny and golden appearance.*

• • • • •

½	**cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
¾	**cup (90 grams) confectioners' sugar**
1	**teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
3	**large egg yolks (56 grams), room temperature and divided**
1	**teaspoon (6 grams) vanilla bean paste**
1½	**cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour**
1	**tablespoon (15 grams) water**

Garnish: flaked sea salt

1. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, confectioners' sugar, and kosher salt at medium speed until pale and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in 2 egg yolks (37 grams) and vanilla bean paste until combined, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour, beating until combined and a dough forms.
3. Turn out dough onto a clean surface, and gently knead until all flour is absorbed. Lightly dust work surface with flour, and roll dough to ¼-inch thickness. Using a 2¼-inch round fluted cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps to use all dough, and place 1 inch apart on prepared pan. Freeze until firm, about 15 minutes.
4. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
5. In a small bowl, whisk together 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water and remaining 1 egg yolk (19 grams). Using a pastry brush, brush egg wash onto chilled dough. Using a fork, score top of dough in a crisscross pattern. Garnish with sea salt, if desired.
6. Bake until edges are light golden brown, about 10 minutes. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

ROCKY ROAD COOKIES

Makes about 15 cookies

The classic combination of chocolate, marshmallow, and peanuts baked into warm, gooey cookies is irresistible! Be sure to use marshmallow bits, which are dehydrated, instead of regular marshmallows for the right texture. The bits are soft when the cookies are warm, but become crispy, meringue-like pieces once cooled.

* * *

½	**cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
½	**cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
½	**cup (110 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
1	**large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
1¼	**cups (156 grams) all-purpose flour**
½	**cup (43 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder**
1	**teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
½	**cup (25 grams) marshmallow bits*, plus more for topping**
½	**cup (70 grams) unsalted peanuts, coarsely chopped, plus more for topping**
½	**cup (85 grams) semisweet chocolate chips**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in egg and vanilla, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, baking soda, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until almost fully combined. Add marshmallow bits, peanuts, and chocolate chips. Beat at low speed until combined and no dry streaks remain.

4. Using a 3-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 50 grams each), and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Top with marshmallow bits or peanuts.

5. Bake until surface is dry and edges are set, about 15 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

**We used Jet-Puffed Vanilla Mallow Bits, a small, dehydrated marshmallow product. Do not use regular mini marshmallows in this recipe; they will melt and burn.*

REINDEER KISSES

Makes about 50 cookies

These meringue bites are a combination of sweet, chewy interior and crispy exterior. Made by gently whipping egg whites and gradually adding sugar, ensuring it is fully dissolved to prevent weeping and ensure a stable meringue, these airy cookies are a delicately sweet treat reminiscent of a marshmallow. Bake the piped kisses low and slow to prevent them from getting too dark, and decorate with melted chocolate and festive sprinkles for a fun presentation.

• • • • •

3 large egg whites (90 grams), room temperature
¼ teaspoon cream of tartar
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
¼ teaspoon (1 gram) vanilla extract
1 (10-ounce) package (283.8 grams) dark chocolate melting wafers
Assorted red, white, and green sprinkles

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat egg whites, cream of tartar, and salt at medium-low speed until soft peaks form, 4 to 5 minutes. With mixer on low speed, add sugar in a slow, steady stream, beating until combined. (This should take about 2 minutes.) Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until thick and shiny, 7 to 8 minutes, stopping halfway through mixing to scrape sides of bowl; rub meringue between your fingers to make sure it is smooth and no sugar granules remain. Add vanilla, and beat at medium-high speed until combined, about 30 seconds.
2. Preheat oven to 225°F (107°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
3. Transfer meringue to a large pastry bag fitted with a ½-inch French star piping tip (Ateco #826). Holding tip perpendicular to parchment, pipe kisses that are ¼ to 1½ inches wide and 1 inch high at least ½ inch apart on prepared pans.
4. Bake until dry to the touch, 45 minutes to 1 hour. Turn oven off, and let meringue kisses cool completely in oven with door closed overnight. (Alternatively, let cool in oven with door closed for at least 1 hour; remove from oven [meringues will peel off parchment without sticking], and let cool completely on pans.)
5. In a microwave-safe bowl, heat chocolate on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until fully melted and smooth.
6. In a medium bowl, place sprinkles.
7. Dip bottom of 1 cooled kiss in melted chocolate, letting excess drip off. Dip in sprinkles. Place on parchment paper, and let stand until chocolate is set. Repeat with remaining kisses. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

RICCIARELLI

Makes about 18 cookies

Ricciarelli *are traditional Italian almond cookies made with the ground nuts, flavored with citrus, rolled in sliced nuts, and even shaped to resemble almonds. A simple meringue base ensures these cookies remain light and fluffy.*

* * *

2	**large egg whites (60 grams), room temperature**
¼	**teaspoon kosher salt**
2	**teaspoons (3 grams) orange zest**
1	**teaspoon (5 grams) fresh orange juice**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) almond extract**
2½	**cups (240 grams) almond flour**
2	**cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar**
1	**cup (113 grams) sliced almonds**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. In a medium bowl, beat egg whites and salt with a hand mixer at medium speed until soft peaks form, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in orange zest and juice and almond extract. Using a rubber spatula, fold in flour and confectioners' sugar until combined and a dough forms. (It may seem dry at first but will hydrate as you continue folding.)

3. In a small bowl, place sliced almonds.

4. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 28 grams each), and roll in sliced almonds. Place at least 1½ inches apart on prepared pan. Slightly taper ends of each scoop to create an almond shape.

5. Bake until set and light golden brown, 15 to 18 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. Reshape cookies into an almond shape, if needed. Let cool on pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Dust with confectioners' sugar. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

TOASTED HAZELNUT SABLÉS

Makes about 22 cookies

With its higher percentage of butterfat, European-style butter ensures these sparkling cookies have a decadent, melt-in-your-mouth texture.

* * *

⅓	**cup (38 grams) whole peeled hazelnuts, toasted**
2	**cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour**
¾	**cup plus 2 tablespoons (198 grams) European-style unsalted butter, softened**
⅓	**cup (40 grams) confectioners' sugar**
1¼	**cups (250 grams) granulated sugar, divided**
1	**teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
1	**vanilla bean, split lengthwise, seeds scraped and reserved**
1	**large egg yolk (19 grams)**

1. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse hazelnuts until finely ground, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. In a medium bowl, whisk together ground nuts and flour.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter at medium-low speed until smooth, about 1 minute. Add confectioners' sugar, ¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar, and salt, and beat until smooth, about 1 minute, stopping to scrape paddle and bottom and sides of bowl. Add reserved vanilla seeds and egg yolk, and beat until combined, about 1 minute. Add flour mixture in two additions, beating just until combined after each addition and stopping to scrape paddle and bottom and sides of bowl. Turn out dough onto a work surface, and gently knead 3 to 4 times.

3. Place dough between 2 sheets of parchment paper, and roll to ½-inch thickness. Transfer dough between parchment to refrigerator. Refrigerate until set, at least 2 hours.

4. Preheat oven to 325°F (170°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

5. Using a 2-inch round cutter dipped in flour, cut dough, and place 1 inch apart on prepared pans. Repeat rolling, refrigerating, and cutting with scraps to use all dough.

6. Bake, one pan at a time, until bottom edges are golden brown, about 15 minutes. Let cool on pans for 1 minute.

7. In a shallow dish, place remaining 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar. Using a spatula, place a few cookies at a time in sugar; using a small spoon, cover top and sides with sugar. Using spatula, lift cookies, and let cool completely on wire racks. Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

NO-BAKE CHOCOLATE-PEANUT BUTTER-OAT COOKIES

Makes about 28 cookies

Though these cookies are delicious warm, they can be a little messy, so we suggest waiting for them to fully set up before digging in. They're a great recipe for getting little hands into the kitchen with you during the holidays.

* * *

½	**cup (113 grams) unsalted butter**
2	**cups (400 grams) granulated sugar**
½	**cup (120 grams) whole milk**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt**
¼	**cup (20 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder**
3	**cups (300 grams) old-fashioned oats**
½	**cup (128 grams) plus 3 tablespoons (48 grams) creamy peanut butter, divided**
2	**teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**
Garnish: flaked sea salt	

1. Place a sheet of parchment or wax paper on kitchen counter.

2. In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Whisk in sugar, milk, and kosher salt until combined. Add cocoa, and whisk until well combined and smooth. Increase heat to medium-high, and bring to a rolling boil, stirring occasionally; cook, without stirring, for 1½ minutes. (It is important that the whole pot is at a rolling boil before you start your timer.) Turn off heat, and stir in oats until well combined. Immediately stir in ½ cup (128 grams) peanut butter and vanilla. Let stand for 1 minute. Working quickly, using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, immediately scoop mixture (about 35 grams each), and place on prepared paper. (See Note.)

3. In a small microwave-safe bowl, heat remaining 3 tablespoons (48 grams) peanut butter on high for 30 seconds. Transfer to a small pastry bag, and cut a very small opening in tip; drizzle onto cookies. Garnish with sea salt, if desired. Let stand until cookies are completely cool and fully set. Store in an airtight container for up to 7 days.

Note: *To prevent cookies from spreading while scooping, wait to release the scoop until it is resting on the parchment paper.*

COOKIE BUTTER BLONDIES

Makes about 16 bars

Recipe by Dorie Greenspan. Excerpted from Dorie's Anytime Cakes *by Dorie Greenspan.*
Copyright © 2025 by Dorie Greenspan. Reprinted with permission by Harvest, an imprint of HarperCollins.

Here's how I saw it: if speculoos cookies, those crisp cinnamon and Christmas-spice cookies that are the ideal go-along with coffee, are good, and if cookie butter made from speculoos is two good things in one, or doubly good, then putting them together in a blondie could only be the best. I loved the idea for its logic and its irresistibility, and then I loved the blondies for their taste and texture. The cookie butter gets worked in with the regular butter and, to make sure that there's layer on layer of flavor, a handful of chopped cookies is stirred into the batter along with some chocolate. The blondies bake up golden and have that characteristic blondie chew. The surprise is the edges—they're like chocolate-chip cookies! Although the blondies have plenty of flavor, they are happily companionable—as good with coffee as the little speculoos cookies are. Also good with ice cream. Also good cut into triangles, and just as good cut into small cubes and nibbled on the way to anywhere.

* * * * *

1½	**cups (204 grams) all-purpose flour**
½	**teaspoon baking powder**
½	**teaspoon fine sea salt**
½	**teaspoon ground cinnamon**
¼	**teaspoon baking soda**
½	**cup (140 grams) cookie butter (see below)**
8	**tablespoons (4 ounces/113 grams) unsalted butter, at room temperature**
½	**cup (100 grams) sugar**
½	**cup (100 grams) brown sugar**
2	**large eggs, at room temperature**
1	**large egg yolk, at room temperature**
1	**teaspoon pure vanilla extract**
3	**ounces (85 grams) milk or semisweet chocolate, chopped into chip-size pieces, or about ½ cup (85 grams) chocolate chips**
6	**speculoos cookies (about 75 grams), coarsely chopped (see below)**

STORING: Tightly wrapped, the blondies will keep at room temperature for about 3 days. Wrapped airtight, they can be frozen for up to 1 month; thaw in the wrapper.

A WORD ON COOKIE BUTTER AND COOKIES: Biscoff is my go-to, but if you have a favorite cookie butter, use it. Ditto the cookies.

1. Center a rack in the oven and preheat it to 325°F. Spray a 9-x-9-inch baking pan with baker's spray, line the bottom with a piece of parchment paper, lightly spray the paper and smooth the spray over the surface with a pastry brush—a silicone brush makes the job easier. (Although you could butter and flour the pan, I find that baker's spray works best here.)

2. Whisk the flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon and baking soda together.

3. Working in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, or in a large bowl with a hand mixer, beat the cookie butter, butter and both sugars together on medium speed until light and smooth, about 2 minutes. Add the eggs one by one, beating for a minute after each egg goes in. Add the yolk and beat for a minute, then beat in the vanilla—be sure to scrape down the bowl and beater(s) as you go. Turn the mixer off, add the flour mixture and pulse the machine on and off to start the blending. With the mixer on low, beat just until the dry ingredients are almost incorporated and the batter is light and silky—you don't need to be thorough now. Add the chocolate and cookie pieces and spin the mixer on low a couple of times, then stop and finish the blending by hand with a sturdy spatula. Scrape the batter into the pan and smush it around to even it; pay special attention to the corners—you want to make sure they get their fair share of batter.

4. Bake the blondies for 32 to 35 minutes, or until the top is golden and feels dry; a tester inserted into the center of the cake should come out clean. Transfer the pan to a rack and wait for 5 minutes, then run a table knife around the edges of the cake and carefully turn it out onto the rack. Peel away the parchment, flip the cake over onto another rack and let it cool to room temperature.

5. How you cut the blondies is up to you: large squares, slender rectangles, pointy triangles or bite-sized bits.

MELOMAKARONA

Makes about 24 cookies

Soft, chewy, and swathed in citrus-infused honey, you'll find these ancient-in-origin cookies at just about every Greek family's holiday celebrations. Although melomakarona *are traditionally shaped by hand, we've sped up the process by rolling out the dough and using a cutter.*

* * *

Dough:
2 cups (250 grams) unbleached cake flour
½ cup (80 grams) semolina flour
1 tablespoon (3 grams) orange zest
1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder
¾ teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt
½ teaspoon (3 grams) baking soda
½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
⅛ teaspoon ground cloves
¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar
¼ cup (56 grams) extra-virgin olive oil
¼ cup (56 grams) neutral oil
¼ cup (60 grams) fresh orange juice
2 tablespoons (30 grams) cognac
1 tablespoon (21 grams) honey
2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract

Syrup:
1½ cups (300 grams) granulated sugar
⅔ cup (160 grams) water
2 teaspoons (2 grams) orange zest
¼ cup (60 grams) fresh orange juice
1 cinnamon stick
2 whole cloves
¼ cup (85 grams) honey

Topping:
¼ cup (28 grams) finely chopped toasted walnuts
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
⅛ teaspoon kosher salt

1. For dough: In a medium bowl, whisk together flours, orange zest, baking powder, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves.

2. In a large bowl, whisk together sugar, oils, orange juice, cognac, honey, and vanilla. Stir in flour mixture until a soft dough forms. Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 1 hour.

3. For syrup: In a small heavy-bottomed saucepan, bring sugar, ⅔ cup (160 grams) water, orange zest and juice, cinnamon stick, and cloves to a boil over medium heat, stirring occasionally until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat, and stir in honey. Pour into a heatproof shallow dish, and let cool completely.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper. Top 1 prepared pan with a wire rack.

5. On a work surface, roll dough into a ½-inch-thick circle. Using a 1¾-inch round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps to use all dough, and gently shape into ovals. Place 1 inch apart on prepared pans. Using a fork, gently prick top of dough once or twice.

6. Bake until bottom edges are lightly browned, about 20 minutes.

7. Meanwhile, for topping: In a small bowl, whisk together walnuts, cinnamon, and salt.

8. Working in batches of about 6 cookies, using a slotted spatula, immediately remove hot cookies from pan, and place in cooled syrup, gently turning cookies to coat. Place cookies on prepared rack, and sprinkle with topping. Let cookies cool completely on rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

BROWN SUGAR
Brown Sugar Sandwich Cookies **88**
Cookie Butter Blondies **124**
Pecan Praline-Topped Sweet Potato Cookies **22**

BUTTER
Browned Butter-Chocolate Chunk-Candy Cookies **7**
French Salted Butter Cookies **112**
Maple Buttercream **92**
Pizzelles **19**
Toasted Hazelnut Sablés **120**

CHOCOLATE
Beggars' Bars **75**
Brown Sugar Sandwich Cookies **88**
Bûche de Noël Cookies **66**
Chocolate-Covered Cherry Thumbprints **104**
Chocolate-Covered Marshmallow Cookies **82**
Chocolate-Peppermint Marble Cookies **27**
Cookie Butter Blondies **124**
Crème de Menthe Brownies **59**
Dark Chocolate-Orange Cookies **38**
Dubai Chocolate Sandwich Cookies **97**
Ganache Filling **88**
London Fog Cookies **46**
Mexican Hot Chocolate Cookies **50**
No-Bake Chocolate-Peanut Butter-Oat Cookies **121**
Nussecken **15**
Old-Fashioned Gingersnaps **30**
Peppermint-Glazed Black Cocoa Cookies **70**
Red Velvet Pinwheels **51**
Reindeer Kisses **116**
Rocky Road Cookies **113**
Salted Espresso Shortbread **35**
Spumoni Checkerboards **42**
Tante Erika's Creamy Chocolate Oatmeal Squares **67**
Tiramisù Cookies **71**

CITRUS
Beggars' Bars **75**
Dark Chocolate-Orange Cookies **38**
Lemon-Glazed Gingerbread Cookies **78**
London Fog Cookies **46**
Melomakarona **125**
Pfeffernüsse (German Spice Cookies) **74**
Ricciarelli **117**
Sicilian Lemon-Almond Cookies **79**
Spiced Cranberry-Orange Cookies **39**

COFFEE
Salted Espresso Shortbread **35**
Tiramisù Cookies **71**

CREAM CHEESE
Cream Cheese Buttercream **102**
Cream Cheese Filling **96**
Italian Cream Thumbprints **100**
Jam-Swirled Cream Cheese Cookies **58**
Red Velvet Pinwheels **51**

FRUIT
Beggars' Bars **75**
Chocolate-Covered Cherry Thumbprints **104**
Cuccidati Cookie Cake **96**
Date Balls **18**
Fruitcake Cookies **47**
Oatmeal-Date Cookies **63**
Rum Raisin Cookies **43**
Spiced Cranberry-Orange Cookies **39**

HONEY AND MAPLE
Cuccidati Cookie Cake **96**
Maple Buttercream **92**
Maple Creme Cookies **92**
Melomakarona **125**
Pfeffernüsse (German Spice Cookies) **74**
Tiramisù Cookies **71**

JAMS AND PRESERVES
Cuccidati Cookie Cake **96**
Jam Crumble Cookies **93**
Jam-Swirled Cream Cheese Cookies **58**
Linzer Cookie Torte **105**
Pizzicati **85**
Spumoni Checkerboards **42**

MARSHMALLOW
Chocolate-Covered Marshmallow Cookies **82**
Marshmallow-Stuffed Molasses Cookies **89**
Rocky Road Cookies **113**

MISCELLANEOUS
Boiled Cider **101**
Ossi dei Morto **31**
Sicilian Ribbon Cookies **26**

NUTS AND SEEDS
Bizcochitos **109**
Bûche de Noël Cookies **66**
Cuccidati Cookie Cake **96**
Dubai Chocolate Sandwich Cookies **97**
Fruitcake Cookies **47**
Italian Cream Thumbprints **100**
No-Bake Chocolate-Peanut Butter-Oat Cookies **121**
Nussecken **15**
Pecan Praline Sauce **22**
Pecan Praline-Topped Sweet Potato Cookies **22**

holiday
cookies
bake from scratch
Bake, Share, Celebrate
75 recipes

on the cover

Browned Butter-Chocolate Chunk-Candy Cookies **7**
Old-Fashioned Gingersnaps **30**
Red Velvet Pinwheels **51**
Peppermint Meltaways **62**
Peppermint-Glazed Black Cocoa Cookies **70**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
STEPHANIE WELBOURNE STEELE
SELECT RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY
AMANDA STABILE
FOOD AND PROP STYLING BY
KATIE MOON DICKERSON

Pistachio Kataifi Filling **98**
Ricciarelli **117**
Rocky Road Cookies **113**
Sicilian Lemon-Almond Cookies **79**
Spumoni Checkerboards **42**
Toasted Hazelnut Sablés **120**

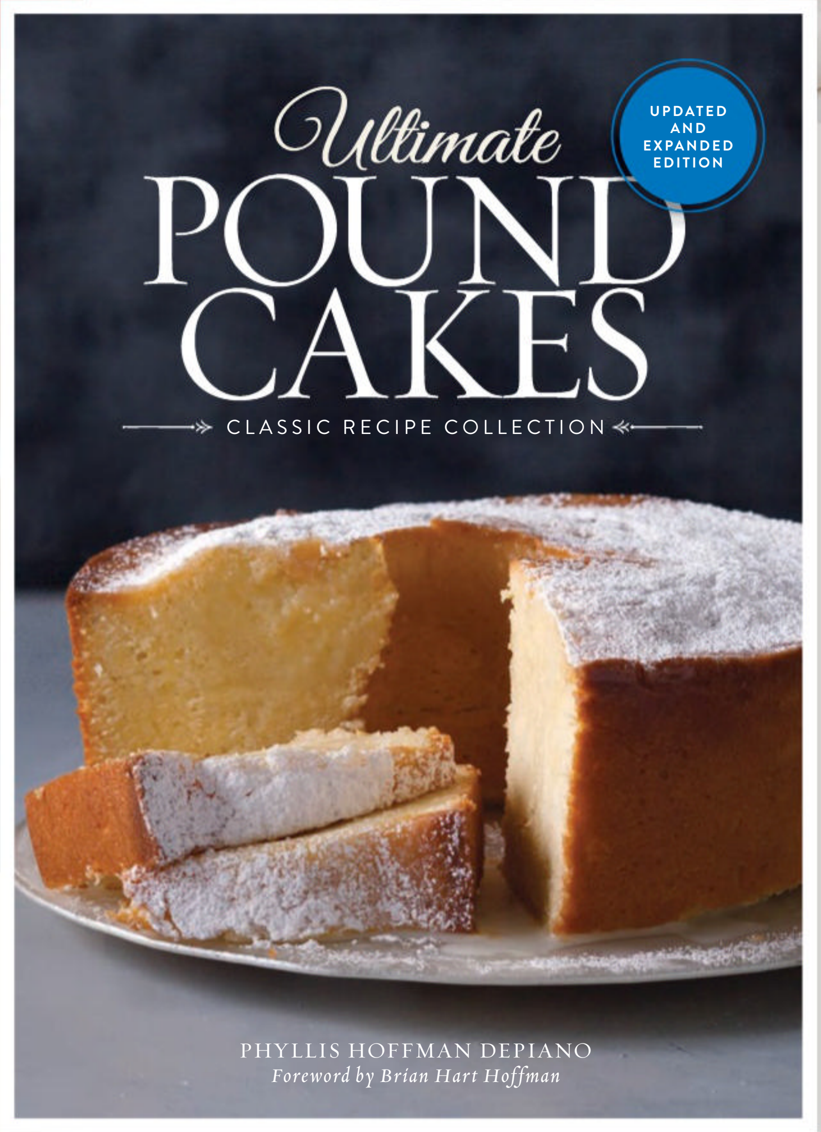
OATS
No-Bake Chocolate-Peanut Butter-Oat Cookies **121**
Oatmeal Crinkle Cookies **23**
Oatmeal-Date Cookies **63**
Tante Erika's Creamy Chocolate Oatmeal Squares **67**

PEPPERMINT
Chocolate-Peppermint Marble Cookies **27**
Crème de Menthe Brownies **59**
Peppermint-Glazed Black Cocoa Cookies **70**
Peppermint Meltaways **62**

SPICES
Apple Cider Whoopie Pies **101**
Bizcochitos **109**
Chocolate-Covered Marshmallow Cookies **82**
Cookie Butter Blondies **124**
Cuccidati Cookie Cake **96**
Gingersnaps **82**
Lemon-Glazed Gingerbread Cookies **78**
Marshmallow-Stuffed Molasses Cookies **89**
Melomakarona **125**
Mexican Hot Chocolate Cookies **50**
Milk Punch Cookies **55**
Oatmeal-Date Cookies **63**
Old-Fashioned Gingersnaps **30**
Pfeffernüsse (German Spice Cookies) **74**
Rum Raisin Cookies **43**
Spiced Cranberry-Orange Cookies **39**

SWEETENED CONDENSED MILK
Milk Punch Cookies **55**
Tante Erika's Creamy Chocolate Oatmeal Squares **67**

ORDER NOW!



Ultimate
POUND CAKES
CLASSIC RECIPE COLLECTION
UPDATED AND EXPANDED EDITION
PHYLLIS HOFFMAN DEPIANO
Foreword by Brian Hart Hoffman

The pound cake got its name for its ingredients: a pound of flour, butter, sugar, and eggs. In this revised edition of the *Ultimate Pound Cakes* book, you will find more than 150 recipes and endless variations to please every palate.

3 EASY WAYS TO ORDER

HOFFMANMEDIASTORE.COM/BOOKS
800-361-8059
83PUP25